

ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE



FRANCIS KELLY, M.A., M.P.

ADRIAN EDGAR, M.A., M.P.

EDWARD G. COLLIER



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Book \_\_\_\_\_

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ON THE FIELD OF HONOR



# *ON THE FIELD OF HONOR*

A COLLECTION OF WAR LETTERS AND REMINISCENCES

OF THREE HARVARD UNDERGRADUATES

WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN

THE GREAT CAUSE



EDITED BY PAUL B. ELLIOTT

*BOSTON*

PRINTED FOR THEIR FRIENDS

1920

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*D. B. Updike, The Merrymount Press, Boston*

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TO THE MEMORY  
OF THREE BRAVE COMRADES  
LIEUTENANTS FRANCIS REED AUSTIN  
ALBERT EDGAR ANGIER  
AND  
EUGENE GALLIGAN  
ALL FALLEN GLORIOUSLY ON  
THE FIELD OF BATTLE  
THIS BOOK  
IS AFFECTIONATELY  
DEDICATED



## INTRODUCTION

**I**T was my good fortune to be one of that small group of Harvard undergraduates who left college at the close of 1917 to enlist as privates in the National Army and attend the Third Officers' Training School at Camp Upton. Our thoughts and actions at college for the preceding year had had but one aim, to get into the service at the earliest possible moment, but until then we had all been prevented on account of our youth.

All of these men I had known at college, some fairly well, others only slightly, but in the life that followed I came to know especially well and to form the closest comradeship with three of them, Albert Angier, Francis Austin, and Eugene Galligan. Our life in the Officers' Training School passed quickly and happily enough until towards the close of March, 1918, when the Seventy-Seventh Division received its overseas orders. The school came to an abrupt close: men from the division were sent back to the ranks, some with the uncertain recommendation that they were eligible to receive the commission of second lieutenant when the War Department should see fit to grant it; others with nothing at all. The comparatively few men from college, of course, could not be ordered directly to the division, as they had not previously belonged to it. We were summoned privately, one by one, to the Commandant's Office, and given the choice

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of staying in America with the probability of receiving a commission very shortly, or of going overseas with the division as privates with great uncertainty as to when, if ever, we would receive our commissions. Nothing was promised, nothing, in fact, known for a certainty. To the great credit of the boys it can be said that practically all volunteered to go over without the keenly hoped-for and long-sought commissions; getting nearer to the scene of action where our services might be of some value was the first consideration. So when the school broke up we were assigned to different companies in the division.

Austin, Angier, Galligan, and myself were fortunate in being assigned to the same battalion of the 305th. Gene was in Company B, Larry in Company D, and Al and I were together in Company C. Here we learned to pocket our pride, keep our mouths shut, and do what we could to help things in general, though apparently nothing was expected of us. We were mere odd numbers and the company organizations all complete without us.

The day for sailing soon came; we were packed in below decks in the cargo hold of the good ship "Vauban," and considered ourselves lucky in getting off to France after only three months and a half in the service. Arriving overseas at the end of April, we spent the next two months and a half in the dull grind of military training, performing the simple duties of private or corporal or

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sergeant as best we could, and always hoping the commissions would arrive. What an interminable wait it was and how often we were disappointed! Finally, however, they "came through," and on Bastille Day we were all sworn in as Second Lieutenants of the National Army. The commissions reached us just as we were to go into real action, thus bringing with them all the responsibilities and cares of handling men's lives in battle, but without any of the pleasant features which a commissioned officer enjoys in a period of training and preparation in camp or behind the lines.

The sad part about being commissioned was that we had to separate: Al and Gene stayed with the 77th, and Larry and I went to the 28th Division. It was a coincidence again that Al and Gene were together in the same battalion of the 308th and Larry and I in the second battalion of the 109th.

After a happy week in Paris which, unfortunately, those who stayed with the 77th Division were denied, Larry and I reported to our new division just as it was going into action in the counter-attack which flattened the Rheims-Soissons salient. We had been with the 109th for about two weeks, when Larry was ordered back to the specialists' school at Langes.

It was during the early part of September, 1918, in the fierce fighting in which our division and the 77th partici-

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pated along the Vesle River and near Fismes, that Angier and Galligan were killed within a week of each other, at the head of their men, encouraging and leading them against heavy odds, outnumbered, but driving back the Boche even as they fell.

Larry returned to the division just before we started the push on the 26th of September in the Argonne. It was mighty rough sledding, but we managed to keep the Hun on the go toward the rear. On the ninth day out, Larry and I were holding a position along a sunken road just beyond Apremont, our men huddling together in the same little "fox holes." About noon Larry had an order to move his men forward and occupy an outpost about five hundred yards to the flank and front. We parted with the expectation of seeing each other in a day or so at most. That night the Boche kept us under a continual bombardment of gas-shells which there was no escaping, and the surgeon ordered many of my company evacuated to hospitals in the rear for treatment. I was sent to Bordeaux, and while there had several letters from Larry and was very glad to hear that he came through the drive untouched.

I persuaded the doctors to let me out of the hospital the first of November and hastened back to the outfit, eager to see and be with them again and especially anxious to get with Larry once more. Arriving at the 109th

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shortly after the armistice, I was terribly grieved to hear that Larry had been seriously wounded that last fateful morning while operating his guns against a heavily defended German position. He was rushed back to a hospital, but the wound was fatal and medical aid could not save him. So Larry and Al and Gene, all in the full vigor and flush of their youth, bravely met heroes' deaths without hesitation, giving their all that the cause of Justice, of Freedom, and of Right might prevail.

In getting this book together I have a two-fold purpose. One is to give a continued account, mostly through letters written home, of the life lived from the time we left Camp Upton for overseas until the end. My main purpose is to attempt to show the wonderful characters of these three men, how bravely and fully they met every test under the worst possible conditions, and what an inspiration they were to all with whom they came in contact. I shall try to do this as much as possible by letting their own words in their letters speak for themselves, adding at times some of my own letters which tell of mutual experiences that their letters do not relate.

I think that very few who did not actually see active service can appreciate the influence of the leader of even so small a unit as a platoon. Everything depends upon him. His men exactly reflect his attitude, and succeed or fail in proportion as he inspires confidence and is in every

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sense a true leader. Larry and Al and Gene always had their men with them; they were implicitly trusted and followed anywhere. Such trust, confidence, and respect of men under the trying conditions of war can be won only by the exercise of justice, fairness, consideration for men, fearlessness in doing the right thing regardless of favor or personal consequences, courage and promptness to act, and a cheery attitude despite difficulties and hardships. But these three had more than the confidence of their men: they had their love and devotion, which the soldier gives only when he realizes that his officer does more than merely honorably perform his duty; when the men recognize in their leader a finer quality than that of the ordinary man, and know him as one to whom they may look up, as pure of soul, clean in mind, always giving his best to others regardless of self.

My hope, as I prepare this book, is that those who read it will receive inspiration from the high, noble lives of these three young officers.

P. B. E.



## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR







*Francis Reed, artist*

## CHAPTER I

**J**UST as the sun shone above the eastern horizon one cold morning on the 14th of April, the company fell in and formed with the battalion and regiment for the first step of our long journey toward France and action. The night before, after all preparations for departure were complete, Camp Upton had been in an uproar of hilarity and enthusiasm; bands of soldiers went from one barrack to another singing farewell songs and cheering the different companies. Signs hastily painted such as "To Let. Apply in France," "Vacant, Owner on European Tour," "For Sale, Apply Proprietor, No Man's Land," were hung on the barracks, fun-making and care-free abandonment were everywhere apparent. The morning of the 14th was very different: all were quiet and thoughtful, we quickly took our places in line keen to be off at last, and realizing that not far ahead lay a task bigger and more serious than any of us had ever tackled in our lives before, a test which would demand of each man great sacrifices, just how great none knew,—perhaps the greatest.

The march to the station was made in almost complete silence entirely free of the chaff, joking, and chatter which usually comes from a marching column. A long train drawn up at the station awaited us and we started, all without the least idea of the port from which we were to embark. Rumors flew thick: Halifax, Boston,

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New York, Hampton Roads, Montreal, these and many other less probable points were suggested, but a two hours' ride brought us to Hoboken and after a short hike down by the piers and an interminable standing in line, we filed, one by one, up a long gangplank into the ship that was to carry us across.

During the next day our ship, the "Vauban," British owned, which had just been requisitioned as a troop ship from her South American traffic, stayed in dock completing her loading. We were assigned quarters more or less comfortable; a few were lucky in getting staterooms but most had hammocks slung above the tables where we ate our meals down in the former cargo holds of the ship. They were all right as long as smooth weather allowed the hatches to be kept open, assuring a good supply of fresh air, but rather disagreeable in rough weather. Fortunately the sea was extremely calm with the exception of two days toward the close of the trip. The second night on board found us still tied at the dock with loading and coaling going on full force, but by the morning of the 16th everything seemed in readiness for the start.

About two o'clock the decks were cleared, every one ordered inside, and with doors and port-holes closed and empty decks our ship slowly nosed its way about and steamed out of port. We stayed below decks for about two hours, until beyond sight of land, and then came on

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deck to find ourselves alone on the high seas nosing our way steadily eastward in the fading light of a beautiful spring dusk.

For the first five days our trip was without incident; we picked up our convoy according to schedule two days out. The troops were busy at drill and life-boat practice. All went smoothly. On the sixth day we ran into a heavy sea and storm which blew itself out after tossing us about for a couple of days.

As we approached and entered the danger-zone excitement ran high. Some of us rather wanted to see a real live submarine in action, for we had confidence that the seven speedy little English destroyers which darted around and in and out our convoy would "get" the sub before she could launch a torpedo. The officers had been congratulating themselves that if there were any submarines about, our convoy was too well guarded for them to venture an attack, but one clear calm morning, when we were still a two days' trip from the coast of Ireland, a U-boat lay in wait.

Drill was over for the morning and the men were idling about on deck waiting for noon chow. Al and I had just finished instructing our signal class and were sitting on the boat deck chatting with a couple of French non-coms who had been instructing in the States.

A dull boom followed by a great blow on the side of

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our ship which made her quiver and shake from keel to mast-top as though a giant had picked her up and shaken her, suddenly disturbed our calm. The bugle from the bridge sounded the alarm and we all rushed to the stations assigned in boat drill. I remember my first thought as I ran down was, "Guess they got us." The leading destroyer had just crossed our bow a few seconds before the explosion occurred and now exhibited a wonderful bit of manoeuvring. Instantly she turned, putting on full speed as she went, so that in describing a semicircle in little more than her own length, her decks tipped away at an angle of almost 40 degrees, just as a motorcycle would tip in speeding around a banked curve. She shot by us gathering headway all the time; water and spray rising in great white sheets from her prow at times completely enveloped her. We heard the whistle pipe and saw her crew, stripped to the waist, swarm out of the hatchways and spring to the gun-stations. A little beyond us geysers of water rose high into the air as her gunners fired depth-bombs from the destroyer's stern. Of course the convoy never stopped, but went on, leaving the destroyers behind to complete their work.

By this time we began to think that perhaps we had n't been torpedoed after all and wondered what it was all about. It later developed that the first great crash which we all thought was a torpedo striking the "Vauban" was



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a depth charge that the destroyer had fired when the ever watchful eyes on her bridge had seen a periscope broach not three hundred yards from our ship. This charge exploded so near us that the concussion was sufficient to shake the whole ship as though she had been actually torpedoed. The sub had immediately dived before she had a chance to get in any dirty work, but not before the destroyers were on her like hounds in at the "death." A half hour later when the leading destroyer steamed past to resume her station at the head of the convoy, they wiggled from the bridge that there was one more U-boat whose evil career had been ended.

Two days later we landed in Liverpool, boarded a troop train, and had a wonderful ride across England to the rest camp at Dover.

*[From this point the letters will carry on the story. The writer's initials come at the end of each letter or extract from his letters.]*

## CHAPTER II

*April 28*

**I**T is all so wonderful I hardly know where to begin. It is really Spring here already. The apple blossoms are out and everything is green and fresh. There are the most wonderful gardens and meadows with sheep and cattle grazing everywhere. As it is such a lovely warm Sunday afternoon people are all dressed up walking around their estates, and down by the brooks soldiers walking with their girls. It is too beautiful to realize it is war. But the spirit as we go flying by,—everywhere they wave their handkerchiefs, American flags, and the girls smile and throw kisses.

The fellows I have in my squad are the smallest in the company, but they are wonderful to be with. Three Italians sing softly some of their Italian songs and they have splendid voices. The others are from the real country and it gives me a thrill when they show me the pictures of their home and family and the love you see in their eyes for their mothers. I would be perfectly happy if I could be right here with them and help them keep that finest of all spirits, but one can never tell the destinies of War.

If you could see the trusting women and children waving at us, you would be happy that we decided that to enlist was the thing to do. I have a little book of Brown-

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ing's poems in my pocket and some day when I feel blue after cussing at the men to make them work, I am planning to get away from the commotion and read them right through from beginning to end.

Here is a little piece of poetry I found written on one of the walls of the buildings:

*It may be only a handshake,  
It may be only a smile,  
But if it makes life sweeter  
Surely it is worth the while.*

F. R. A.

*(A Letter written on train-ride across England)*

*April 29*

It is late afternoon as we fly along, but the sun is still high in the heavens. Everywhere women, children, and young girls wave flags and throw kisses. It gives one a wonderful feeling that the spirit of all is with us, and that we are needed here much more than anywhere else in the world. I certainly agree with Moush that I would rather be a private over here than a Major in the U. S.

Al Angier is still along with me which of course makes it very nice. But it is the best fun of all to explain to my squad about this war and the countries and the principles they are fighting for and trying to answer all kinds of questions that come flying at me every minute.

F. R. A.

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*May 2*

There is not much news. I am here to make good, and we begin about to-morrow our intensive training so that in about a month or so we can really serve our country even though it be in a small way. Please always remember I am just where I want most to be and where I am really learning war, where the need is greatest, and I hope you are as happy as I am here as an enlisted man.

I have grown very fond of my company, its officers and my country. By my company I mean the men, and now I realize what several of my college friends have told me,—“the worst of being an officer is that you want to help the men in every possible way, but Discipline is the barrier which keeps you from associating with them and knowing their feelings, troubles, and character.”

F. R. A.

*May 5*

Quarter of five in the afternoon sitting side of a little brook with birds and flowers everywhere, with nothing anywhere to make you think of War or Sadness. You would love France, you would love the country people, you would just love to walk on and on alone through the fields of daisies, buttercups, violets, clover, dandelions, and a hundred other pink and white wild flowers I have never seen before.

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Fifty of us sleep in a big barn full of hay. The barn belongs to the most delightful old lady and her husband. There are some wonderful children, a little girl about eight and two little boys about eight and ten. We are great friends already, and you can imagine what a change it is after a day's hike or drill to come into a home, where for a few cents you can get a cup of coffee, a couple of eggs, and a wonderful sleep, and best of all be with such loving and hospitable people. How long this heaven will last I don't know, but a farm in the Spring with gardens and meadows everywhere is my idea of something pretty fine. And the best part of it all is that it shows some of our men that every man in France has been off to the War for four years, fighting to protect his little home or farm and his little children. I showed them the pictures of my family and gave the kids some chocolate from America. This afternoon I took a walk, stopping in at the little farms and talking to the housewives and their children; sometimes there would be an old man working in the garden. I would give anything in the world to know French well but at present I have to talk slowly and concerning very simple things. They are so wonderful, just like our own farmers, and none of them have visited the big cities but just live winter and summer in this beautiful Paradise.

F. R. A.

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*May 6*

I awoke in the morning to find it pouring rain. We waded up to breakfast, a quarter of a mile in the rain and I got a chance to look at our billets.

We were in a well-built stable with plenty of fairly clean straw on the floor, opening on a barnyard where a sadly bedraggled peacock, many hens and ducks, and a few cows were moseying around. We were, in a word, in billets.

Since then we have become settled and very comfortable. The peacock spreads his wonderful tail for me often. The sun shines almost continuously and we are all very happy.

The country is very peaceful and quiet,—War very far away except when the big guns, far in the distance, begin their evening bombardment which comes to us as a dull rumble like thunder.

Everything is wonderful and fine. Remember you must not worry. I am still disgracefully safe and sound.

E. G.

*May 6*

I can't tell you in writing how wonderful the country sections of France are, and to-day if you would only picture the small farm-houses and fields and flowers, you would wonder how there can be such a thing as war. But

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when you stop to think, it would be the finest thing in the world to help protect the farms and the hospitable lovable peasants.

We are billeted in a great big barn which belongs to an old French peasant. His wife is so sweet and lovable. She cooks us coffee over an open hearth fire and gives us all the eggs we can possibly stow away, and when we come in hungry and the army mess isn't ready on time, she wants to share the bread and butter she provides for the family. If I don't accomplish a single other thing over here, I am going to show these people that we are their friends and allies, and do all I can to make the men respect them and in no way take advantage of them.

F. R. A.

*May 7*

Every day is a joy because after finishing the drill I come back to a wonderful home and a little girl aged eight runs out to welcome me, and I eat my supper out under the blooming fruit trees and then a little walk thru the fields, she pointing out the flowers and birds and teaching me the names. It makes me forget war, and every evening I hit the hay the happiest man in France,—warm beautiful sunsets and love for all the world.

F. R. A.

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*(Second Letter after landing in France)*

*Somewhere in France*

*No date*

For a while we were camped outside of a fairly good sized French city, and here I think I saw one of the most wonderful and impressive sights I ever hope to see. Hundreds of soldiers of all nationalities walked through the streets, all gathered together fighting for one cause. There were English, French, Belgians, Italians, Australians, and New Zealanders, and of course Americans, all mingling. Take it from me it sure thrilled. About all except the Americans had seen fighting and many, especially the older men, looked like hardened old veterans.

The town has been raided a few times by the Boche aeroplanes and a few wrecked buildings show the results of that business.

It sure was an interesting experience seeing and hearing these various soldiers. It is the first time, I guess, that so many different sorts of men have been brought into such close contact. I shall have some interesting things to say about that which would probably not pass the censor. National feeling and consciousness has been developed and each nationality has been welded together as only can be accomplished by such a gathering of the real representatives of the nations. I only hope that this war will weld together the American nation in the same way and



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bring out a national feeling and develop, you might say, the personality and character of the nation,—for the real character and personality is that of the people as a whole and not just that of a few men who govern the nation and declare the policies of the nation.

We have lain dormant, as it were, for some time, intent only on our own interests, caring little for the interests of nations. But our men will come back, I think, with larger views and a better pride in their country.

Of course entering the War was the only thing for us to do and it's a great shame we did not enter the struggle before.

Everybody seems to feel that Germany is nearing the end of her rope. I talked with a number of men who have just come "down the line,"—some were in the trenches when Fritz first came over in this last big push. One of these fellows I talked with, an English chap, has been in four years and has been over the top several times. He was a private and has some sort of decoration for bravery. He had just been wounded for the third time, a small shrapnel wound on the wrist, and was in when the Germans came over. I guess he has gone back now. Men are sent out for the smallest wounds and are taken care of excellently.

A. E. A.

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**D**URING the month and a half our regiment spent in the British training area behind the lines near Arras, non-coms from each company were sent to the lines for a few days' experience and observation. Gene was picked to go up, and it was during his time at the front that he wrote this letter to Professor Charles Cope-land, who is known affectionately to his students and friends as "Copey."

*MAY 10*

DEAR COPEY: You really should be living in a dug-out, cool, comfortable and in this case clean! But I'll go back a little.

From the place where I last wrote you we journeyed a bit and came to a little French town where we were billeted. I was very lucky,—got a barn with a *roof* for my squad,—and we lived like lords. The barn used to be the domicile of a big Rosa Bonheur farm-horse, but since ejection proceedings,—delicately accomplished with the use of several bayonets,—the poor beast comes round at midnight almost every night, and sadly kicks at the door, whinnies and neighs until every one's awake, dodges the army shoes, size 14, which come hustling thru the darkness and goes away to sleep in the fields some-

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where. A farmhand the other day told me that this very horse brought a carload of people from Belgium in the days of the refugees, almost four years ago, so we seriously considered the construction of some kind of a shelter for him.

Well, about a week ago, I got orders to move up to the front to do some special work. With two other men from my company we took a long motor journey to here. And as I say, we live in a clean, cool, comfortable dug-out, thirty feet underground, so we can laugh at anything Fritz sends over. And he sends them over not infrequently too. We're about 2000 yards back of No-Man's Land,—near enough you see.

Just now, I'm sitting in the trench outside the dug-out entrance watching the beetles on the trench walls run about and play tag. It's a wonderful warm day,—everything seems asleep in the sun,—there's hardly a sound. Then there will be a faint boom in the distance and a whee-ee that grows louder and louder. I begin to wonder where it will hit,—stop writing for a minute. This whee-ee becomes almost a scream,—something passes just overhead with a fearful rush,—and there's a crash that shakes the air. I can hear the bits of shell sing over my head as they scatter, I hear some plop into the ground perhaps a few yards away. That's Fritz! Just keeping an eye on things.

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Fritz is n't the only one to make a noise and spoil our noon-day siesta. Our shells sing over us continually, and if an aeroplane of either side becomes too venturesome, you can hear the old machine guns begin to chatter. And the Archies, as the anti-aircraft guns are called, begin to bang away. A little black puff appears in the sky near the plane; a minute later you get the report strangely detached. Then when a *straf* begins down to the south, all hell breaks loose, so we drop below decks to sing and talk. We have a jolly crowd and many good times.

E. G.

May 12

At present we are billeted in the most beautiful little French village you could possibly imagine. From the station where we left the train to this town of Licques is about twenty miles. It is one of the finest bits of country I have ever seen. We debarked from the train that had brought us from Calais about noon, and were fortunate in having auto trucks to carry the packs.

It was a rare spring day, the air soft and sweet and filled with the fragrance of apple-blossoms, now just in their prime. Our road out of the village led us down one of those long straight avenues completely arched in on both sides by beautiful trees,—trees with their tall, bare, stately trunks crowned at the top with a magnificent

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spread of green,—trees that must have taken a hundred years to perfect in their absolute symmetry and grace. This avenue stretched out perfectly straight for several miles before us. I don't know if there are other such roads anywhere but in France, but you must have seen them when you were here and can probably recall their beauty. On either side of the road was the most picturesque rolling country of green fields dotted here and there with clumps of beautiful trees and pretty little red-roofed cottages which seemed to have sprung up from the ground in the midst of the foliage in which they nestled.

We walked on until about 9 o'clock in the evening when we came to Licques. Our billets are farm-houses, sheds, barns and outhouses, among which the men are stationed. We are right in with the "cows and chickens." The beauty of being billeted like this is that you are living right with the French people and get constant opportunity to talk with them.

P. B. E.

*May 17*

I just want to tell you I am very very happy at this job which is one not only of studying about war but studying about men,—and how best to accomplish the end toward which we are all working now with heart and soul,—the defeat of our great enemy,—the enemy of

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peace, liberty and everything that is right. I tell you, Dad, if a fellow knows how to go about it, he could make a success right here in the position I am in, because if you were here you would realize that there are many many situations, arguments, criticisms, acts of stupidity, dissatisfaction, etc., which do more harm to the cause than you would possibly imagine, which can be squelched only by some one in their midst with a little tact and intelligence. I don't claim that I have that tact and intelligence, but believe me I hope to develop it in time, to some extent, because I believe it is bound to help in the end,—every little thing that is said or done to set things straight or back up our splendid officers at times when they are not in a position to do it themselves.

F. R. A.

*June 6*

. . . So I kept right on going and to-day I felt as though I was headed on the right road with the men behind me in everything I say or do. It is a pretty rough road sometimes, but if I can go to bed each night with the feeling that I have put more spirit and a better spirit in some one man in the platoon, I have accomplished something. Perhaps you never realized how important a part a good army *morale* plays. For example, when the soldier gets a good meal, or a wise order is given to make things

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more comfortable for the men they march forward singing and in step, but a poor breakfast makes a few ring-leaders dissatisfied, and there is no life to the drill or the hike. This is by no means to convey to you that I am a howling success over here and that the Germans had better look out when I get in charge of any one at the front; but just to let you know I haven't forgotten what we are all fighting for and the duty I owe you all to make my education and training count every minute.

There are rumors of our commissions being on the way, but as long as I feel I am helping to prepare these men for the front, I never give rumors a thought because if a man deserves a commission he will get it soon enough.

F. R. A.

*June 5*

You can't guess where I was? Well, I'll give you three tries. No! You've missed. I was up in the front line on an observation trip for four days. I had a most interesting time and as instructive a few days as I have run up against yet, although I didn't get a Boche.

I know now what a "Minne" (*minnen werfer*) is, a "coal-box," a *straf* and many other terms which apply to the works of old Fritz.

The sector I visited was comparatively quiet, only an occasional *straf*, which are surprisingly easy to dodge.

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As long as the first shell or salvo does not land within a few feet of you, you can generally get out of the way of any systematic *straf* if you're fast enough on your feet and can round the corners of a trench with celerity.

It was wonderful to meet the boys who have been thru four years of this struggle. I was fortunate in being in with a bunch who are noted for their dash and courage. It certainly was an education and they treated me O. K. You know, I think soldiering makes real men. I have found that in spite of rough exterior they all have their good sides.

Well, I am back again now at billets with the company and expect to sleep in good quarters for a spell. While "up the line" I slept in a "bivie," a small hole in the side of a trench, which houses two or three men and as many families of "cooties."

I returned congratulating myself that I had escaped that wary creature. I "read the book" (my undershirt) and he was nowhere to be seen. But a while ago I discovered him, probably a member of a prosperous family. I guess I'll have to pursue the method one of the boys "up the line" suggested: Fool 'em all: turn your shirt inside out and it takes the cooties two days to get back.

Don't be afraid for me here in France. As you have realized, there are plenty of temptations. Some fellows have fiancées they idolize in the United States. I have none, but



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I have a Mother who is constantly a source of inspiration. As you see by the book of poems I sent, I have copied them in my notebook.

A. E. A.

*June 9*

You may sympathize with me in my troubles now, but believe me, I am enjoying it all. It's some grand big experience let me tell you. I do not need sympathy for most of these inconveniences are small and I can see the funny side of them. Imagine getting cigarettes by ration weekly. I stand in line and get my little three packages of English Tommie fags, and on the side let me tell you I enjoy these Ruby Queens or Red Hussars just as much as Hermitage Specials. I am really soldiering now. Eh Bo!

A. E. A.

*June 11*

. . . Then pretty soon the old farmer himself appeared on the scene with a bottle of Madeira which he claims he brought with him from Algiers where his family originally came from . . . and to finish off with, we had cider and coffee and then the old lady insisted we take along four hard boiled eggs apiece for our lunch to-day. It is true hospitality everywhere, and I almost always leave my address and tell them to write *après la guerre*. If you

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

see Mrs. Angier, you might tell her that there are two soldiers who will never go hungry or thin in this country where generosity is in every nook and crevice, and I believe it will be the same in the trenches if we ever get there to do our little bit.

F. R. A.

*June 14*

This morning just before breakfast (at 6 a.m.) I went to mass in the most wonderful little country church. There were only three or four little girls and five or six little boys and a few old ladies, but it was lovely with the sun streaming in through the stained glass windows and the flowers at the altar and the lighted candles, the nicest old priest and a tiny organ.

I can carry on quite an intelligent conversation although often I nod and say "oui," "oui," when I have no more idea of what they are talking of than the man in the moon. Curfew rings at 9, but I am writing in the quaintest little parlor while an old woman is sewing a rip in one of my khaki shirts. She has brought out her little lamp, which probably hasn't been used for months, because they usually go to bed as soon as it grows dark. I am having the treat of a big cigar which one of the nicest little Italian fellows brought all the way from America with him and he insisted that the Sergeant take it as he had another for

### CHAPTER III

himself. Really there is nothing to the life over here that is unpleasant, in fact, all you read in the papers is mostly bosh. I haven't had an unpleasant day yet. Yesterday I found cooties for the first time and all I did was to get some boiling water from an old lady and give my undershirt a good bath which quickly put an end to their existence. They aren't at all bad and I never knew I had them. Everything in this world isn't half what it's cracked up to be.

F. R. A.

*June 16*

We have recently made a big change in our location leaving the English sector and after a four days' train ride arriving here in a quiet part of the line in Lorraine. Just now we are having a rest in a little town in Eastern France. Our billets are in an interesting old house,—must be five hundred years old,—and I am writing in the kitchen at the same table as the family who are eating their supper. A few minutes ago Al and I had some wonderful eggs fried in nice fresh butter, eggs which the "madame" took, still warm, from under the chickens, and a big bowl of milk which came out of the cow not more than half an hour ago.

It's very cozy now sitting here chatting with madame as I write. Her father, who fought in the Franco-Prussian War of '70, has his chair by the fire and the husband, who

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

has seen three years' service in this war, smokes his pipe after a hard day's work in the fields. Every one works over here—old and young. Yesterday I saw a touching sight,—an old bent man of seventy or eighty years was leaning over a grindstone sharpening his scythe while a little girl, eight or nine years at most, turned the grindstone for him. All civilians show wonderful spirit and are remarkably obliging and nice to us American soldiers.

P. B. E.

*June 18*

I am determined to look upon you no longer as my aunt, but as my fairy godmother. For behold! My last shred of tobacco gave out this morning at nine o'clock and your package arrived at ten. I am so blissfully happy to smoke real tobacco again that my friends peer through the blue cloud that surrounds me and ask me why the rain does n't make me glum.

To make the day further memorable, at two o'clock a batch of mail came in. And the sun came out and I wondered whether my luck had turned at last. I believe it really has, and that the commission may be very near.

I lie awake sometimes thinking of the things I want most. You can realize, I think, how I miss the piano,—I have n't touched one for two months,—and books,—I haven't a solitary one except drill regulations and no

### CHAPTER III

place to carry one anyway,—and music and good fellowship and all the good things of life, of which I have had more than my share perhaps. The great thought that keeps me grinding is that it can't be so very long now before I have some of these good things again—which is a good deal of comfort when you put your scanty meal down on a bench to get some coffee, and a goat eats it up while your back is turned. And the goat goes off laughing internally and externally and I stand looking at him wishing I did n't have to preserve quite such cordial relations with the French people and their property as regulations specify. Believe me, there is no animal so cunning, so wicked and so perpetually hungry as a French goat. A fox, lion or tiger are all household pets compared with him. Happily the French people are not all like their goat. They are very pleasant and to any one who can jabber a little French and inquire after the children,—and even pet the wicked goat,—in very bad *patois* as I have succeeded in doing, they will give anything they have. Many times they have made me an omelet and given me the very last drop of milk in the house when other soldiers failed, because of the Blarney of my tongue. The peasants are a very good sort and we get on well together.

Bugle's blowing for mess. The goat is coming. Another struggle for food. Please ask Lord Rhonda to put a heavy tax on goats.

E. G.

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

*June 21*

As I recently told you, we have made a big change in our location, traveling to an entirely different part of France. Our first month over here we were in billets in little French towns not far behind the lines. You know or must have read that air raids occur very frequently. We passed quite often houses, or rather ruins of houses, where the bombs had struck. These bombs or aerial torpedoes make a terrible wreck of a house, as they do not explode on contact but bury well inside the building and then rip it to pieces.

Air raids, of course, only come off at night, and only on moonlight nights when the Boche can see where he wants to go and get a line on his objective. Raiding hostile machines always fly very high so as to try to avoid the anti-aircraft guns and the machines always come in force—never alone. It is easy to recognize the Germans because their engine has a buzz very different from the noise made by the Allied planes.

About a month ago, one bright moonlight night, we were out in some practice trenches near a village which was frequently bombed. Just after midnight, as we were relieving another company in the front line of our dummy-trenches, the Huns came over. It was a wonderful experience which I shall never forget.

The weird shriek of a siren—the warning to the in-

### CHAPTER III

habitants of the town to duck into their bomb-proof shelters—told us that the Taubes were near. This sound, a melancholy long-drawn-out wail, was repeated three times and then absolute quiet and silence followed. We crouched down in our trenches, listening with all our ears and looking up into a beautiful calm night,—the sky filled with stars and flooded with the light of a bright new moon,—and tried to make out in the sky above, the planes which were speeding toward us. Very soon we heard a faint buzz and hum,—the buzz of the Taubes,—far in the air above our heads and still several miles off in the distance. Almost immediately four broad shafts of light—the searchlights trying to locate the Germans—began to play, moving back and forth across the heavens. Away in front of us the anti-aircraft guns started to crack and little spits of fire, like stars in the sky, flashed continuously.

The Boche came on fast; the buzz of their machines grew louder and louder, and we saw they would pass right over our heads. Now the guns from the town and other stations in the vicinity opened fire and a steady crack and roar broke out. We could see the shells as they burst far up in the sky above us, some of them like shooting stars, others great flashes of light.

The flashlights searched back and forth and just as we could hear the droning buzz right over our heads, I saw

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

a little bar of silver as one of the planes was caught in the light which reflected from the wings. Away above us there, perhaps a couple of miles in the air, it was scarcely visible even in the rays of the powerful searchlight and practically impossible for the guns to hit. In the midst of their crackle several dull booms followed in quick succession and we could feel the ground shake as the bombs landed in the town behind us. One of them must have hit an ammunition dump, for in a minute a regular fireworks started,—shells catching fire and going into the air like rockets, leaving a blazing trail behind them. Of course the Boche never stopped and the buzz gradually grew fainter; new searchlights in the distance opened and those near us went out; the guns in the town ceased firing and all was silent again. Off on the horizon we could see the bands of light slowly crossing the sky and distinguish the flash of the shells which were too far away for us to hear.

One can imagine how the old Heinies must grin to themselves as they speed onward away up in the darkness of the night and laugh at the shells bursting below them. Of course it is largely pure chance where their bombs will land. Many of them explode harmlessly in fields or woods, others may hit a house or barn. That's the deviltry of the thing: the bombs may just as well explode on a church or hospital as strike a munitions fac-



### CHAPTER III

tory or railroad station; and many times in small villages where there is surely no object of military importance the Huns let go some bombs while on their route to important objectives,— just for the pure hell of it, as it seems.

P. B. E.

*June 25*

Please don't tell any one outside the family, but I was so happy the other day when the Captain said, "I understand that the commissions are on the way, and if ever there is a vacancy in the company we all would like you to come to us and see this game through with us." Wasn't that a wonderful compliment, and it came as such a surprise that I hardly knew what to say. You see I have become so attached to every one here that I would really hate to leave, but whenever the time comes for a decision I shall choose where I think I can do the most good and be of the greatest service.

F. R. A.

*June 26*

I have at last reached a place where money is of no value at all, and where love and friendship count for everything. This heaven is a little village entirely in ruins with only four inhabitants, three old women and one old man, but they would give you anything they have. A

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

wonderful big Irishman gave me a corking hair-cut and would n't take a cent, one of the four civilians gave me a couple of eggs and a big glass of milk and wouldn't take a penny, and, best of all, the French soldiers when our rations don't come regularly share their little bit with the lovely cheerfulness and smiles which are everywhere in this country.

F. R. A.

*June 29*

I wish you could see us now,—in a nice little cabin with bunks around the wall in the heart of one of the most beautiful bits of forest one could possibly imagine,—a forest which one might run across in New Hampshire or the Berkshires, with tall graceful elms and beeches whose thick green foliage forms a perfect canopy over a carpet of grass and shrubs.

This morning, it being Sunday, Al and I lay in our bunks puffing cigarettes after a nice breakfast of coffee, bread and apple sauce, which, by the way, we ate in bed as one of the boys brought our mess from the kitchen. We said, with a smile,—“And this is War.” The joke of it is that we are in the front line just a kilo or so from the Boche. We might just as well be on a vacation off in the mountains except for an occasional shell passing over our heads and aeroplanes buzzing back and forth. Of

### CHAPTER III

course it is an extremely quiet sector and we are put here mainly for training purposes. Neither side ever attacks because there is nothing to be gained by the possession of a few miles more or less of this country, and because both Germans and French have extremely comfortable places which either would hate to leave. We are right in with the French, their companies intermingled with ours and a Frenchman beside each American. The French surely are the most courteous, kind-hearted people in the world and would do anything for you. I only hope we don't impose on their good nature.

P. B. E.

*July 4*

There has been nothing hilarious and "hooray-boys" about our 4th to-day. We are all here with a grim purpose, and the best way we could celebrate the day would be to cross No-Man's Land with a load of bombs and give the Boche a taste of the Yankee determination and push. We are back for "rest" now, so this is a safe and sane Fourth.

We read in the paper this a.m. about the American success on Monday last. It was fine news to hear on the Fourth.

We were addressed by a French Colonel, who mentioned in his address the names of Lafayette and Rocham-

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

beau, and the debt we were repaying France many fold. But it must be remembered, nevertheless, that the United States is fighting for her own free existence and principles just as well as France and England.

Nothing as yet of a commission,—pretty tough, isn't it? But it will be here before long, *je pense*.

I think of you all continually,—especially on a day like this.

Judging by the time that your mail takes to get here, this ought to arrive on or within a few days of your birthday. I'll not be with you in body, but in spirit I'll be with you. It certainly is a great way in which you are taking all this sacrifice. Your boy is with you,—you're an inspiration to me, you bet! I am not good at expressing my feelings along this line but I know I owe my ideals to my Mother. God bless you.

A. E. A.

*July 6*

Have just been to service at the Y. M. with Larry and Al; then we all went out to write and are sitting under a small apple tree on a hillside back to back, and nothing but the busy scratching of pens on paper to be heard.

In a little valley down the hill to the left nestles our village, a patchwork of red roofs; while off a mile or so down a pretty winding road another little town just shows

### CHAPTER III

the same red slate roofs above the fringe of green poplars. From the church spire which always dominates these small French towns, the sweet notes of the chimes drift lazily toward us on the breeze. All quiet, peace and the soft beauty of loving nature,—not the slightest suggestion of War.

On the 4th we had a small celebration,—a baseball game, some *real American lemonade*, and each man presented with a fine box of tobacco done up in a Fourth of July box,—red, white and blue. After the game our Colonel and a French Colonel made speeches.

One of the points in the speeches particularly appealed to me,—to the effect that now, for the first time, the American soldiers in France are really and actually celebrating Independence Day and the spirit of Independence and fighting for it too. It is good to feel that we are with the French and helping pay back our many debts to them. Such a wonderful people as they are with a spirit that will never be crushed, or broken or beaten down.

P. B. E.

*July 9*

But, after all, the line is the only thing. I'll stick to the Infantry as long as they leave me with my full quota of arms and legs. It isn't a bed of roses by any means; it's

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

sure hell sometimes, but you always have the feeling that the aeroplanes scout and the artillery makes barrages and the Q. M. sees to food and the medical corps brings up iodine and bandages, — all for the one sole object of helping the Infantry to do the work, — “Over the top and give them hell,” and that’s a wonderful feeling.

E. G.

*July 13*

Well, I suppose you want to know what I’ve been doing. To tell the truth it’s been surprising little as a rule, although there are times when I have no chance to lie in the sun and dream of ice cream sodas.

But there is always a touch of humor to be found in these old French towns. Take, for instance, the Town Crier. They are in every town and they are always the same, — a very old man with a very weak voice. I think that complete inaudibility must be one of the requirements for the position.

You are sitting in front of your billets waiting for something to happen, when along he comes with a very old drum slung around his neck. He stops at the corner of the street, ejects a monstrous quid of tobacco, and beats a long roll on the drum. Whereupon jeering soldiers gather from every corner. The windows are filled, the sidewalks are jammed. All these soldiers are utterly ig-

### CHAPTER III

norant of the French language. The long roll of the drum ceases and there is a hush. The crier digs down into the recesses of his person and produces a dirty bit of paper. He clears his throat; you can hear a pin drop; then he breaks forth into a torrent of French in a squeaky voice. Every one listens with rapt attention. He finishes and hits the drum once as a period. There is a pause; then all the crowd break forth into cheers. The street resounds to shouts of "Encore!" "Encore!" "Louder!" "I don't believe you!" "You're a Liar!" "Kill him!" and other cries. Soldiers rush up and shake his hand and try to steal his drum-sticks. The old man is immensely pleased and goes off to his next stop smiling and bowing to the mob. Meanwhile all who understand French are busily engaged explaining that all he said was that they are going to kill a pig next Friday at 4 o'clock. I get quite weak with laughing. It's really very funny. One day they stole his piece of paper and the next stop the poor old man had a terrible time.

E. G.

## CHAPTER IV

*July 14*

EVERYTHING is quiet except the noise of the street below, where the French and Americans are finishing the revel of a French fête day. As I sit in this little attic on a bench drawn close to a long table writing by the flickering light of a candle, I think over all the events of the past three months. It was exactly three months ago to-day I left the shores of home behind and set out on a transport in the direction of France. It all seems like a wonderful dream because I have been so happy and the time has passed so quickly.

To-day the United States has seen fit to offer me a Commission in the National Army of the United States, and by the light of a candle in the Major's room I swore to defend and support the Constitution to the best of my ability. I feel how young I am to accept the responsibility of men's lives at a time like this, but I feel strong and ever stronger when I think of my father and the wonderful bringing up he has given me; and the love of my mother and the influence of my friends. I shall pray to God that He show me the best way to exercise my authority and come home a better man and worthy of the trust all you at home have placed in me.

F. R. A.



## CHAPTER IV

*July 14*

To-day is a holiday all over France in commemoration of the fall of the Bastile. It is a lovely day, and as I sit out under the trees I wonder what you are doing at home and run over in my mind all my fun and experiences of these last three months. I guess these three months have been about the happiest of my life, and no matter what fate has in store for me from now on, they can never take away these happy three months of living right here with the boys. There is good in every one and I hope I am broad minded enough to help bring it to the surface and recognize it.

The brightest spot of my whole life here will always be the three months with Company D. It is a splendid feeling to look off over the hills and feel you haven't one enemy among those you have been living with, and that in your little family of forty men (my platoon) there is no one who would not help you and no one you would not help.

It was the happiest day of my life when the Captain called me up to him and said that he had given me the first recommendation out of six candidates in the company, and that he would like to have me stay as a Lieutenant in his company. To me that was better than a thousand commissions because he felt that I have the spirit of the boys behind me.

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

But those higher up have seen fit to assign me to the 28th Division where I am to go and start the never ending duties and responsibilities of life anew. Perhaps it is better after all to go where you can command greater discipline, but your heart tells you that you hate to leave men who have been looking up to you for help in the real scrap and in the hard places which they will some day have to face.

F. R. A.

July 16

Received to-day your letter No. 14 ( 23d June ). I wrote you No. 18 on the 15th of July, telling you about commissions. Since then I have taken the oath and am now a 2nd Louey. I expect any day to visit a nearby town to get equipment at Q. M. and report to Div. Hdqrs. for assignment. I am eating at the officers' mess and sleeping with the men. Things are beginning to look up, and with responsibilities, I think I shall get also the joy of doing things. I am on my own now, folks, as I never have been before. You gave me the inheritance and environment. You put me into college. ( I did not have to do this, of course, but the fact remains it was all handed to me on a platter. ) That gave me the opportunity of going to the R. O. T. C. and later the Third O. T. S. Recommendation from there led from a Sergeantcy to a Lieutenancy. It was all handed on a platter. But now,—I am on my own among *men*,—

## CHAPTER IV

real men, who are handling the army that is going to win the War! It's up to me to make good.

Just think, Mother (I have no swelled head, — far from it), but your son twenty-one years of age has been made a 2nd Lieutenant in the Army of the United States, *on active service on foreign soil*. How's that? You see that I've *got* to make good now. Here's my real chance, and I feel the thing for which I have been raised and educated. I'll swing it and come back to you all in the old home town.

I had a long talk with Larry yesterday. It seems we are going to part after being together for six months and before that in college. He is going to a National Guard outfit while I remain with this division. I certainly regret this separation, but you know the Army. Then again one can never tell when we shall bump together again.

The boys over here are convinced that the U. S. is behind them, — that everybody over there with you is working for us and we're working for you. They feel that the big U. S. with all its wonderful resources has plunged into the struggle to end this war with a rush. We sure get confidence from this; if you all there keep on showing us, as you have been, that the folks at home are in it heart and soul, and every one, big and small, old and young, are pulling together, we'll swing in with a will and squelch the Boche. The boys get together, as

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

you may well imagine, and hash over the war and the work at home. From letters and newspapers we are learning of the strides and bounds that the old U. S. is taking. It gives us punch.

A. E. A.

*July 18*

Am still having a wonderful old time because I am still with Company D still waiting for my discharge from the ranks, so you see I am both an officer and a sergeant at the same time.

Our Company D officers are marvelous, they have invited us to their mess, and to-night I'm going to be officer of the guard. Doesn't that sound important? They are the finest men I have ever seen, and no matter where I go I feel sure I shall never come in contact with finer. For example, last night late, we were all working in the orderly room, when the supply sergeant came around for a detail of six men to carry ammunition. Well, the officers laughed, took off their coats, and went out in the rain, and we lugged heavy boxes for over an hour simply because the men had gone to bed and the officers had n't the heart to wake them up after the good work they had done during the day.

Yesterday I went over and chatted with Al all the afternoon. He is a wonderful boy and we have certainly been a great help to one another, at least he has given

## CHAPTER IV

me wonderful advice and pulled me over the rough places cheerfully and easily. Out of the seven fellows recommended for commissions in his company, his Captain called him in personally to tell him that when the Colonel sent for further recommendations he handed in Al's name first, and he congratulated Al on his spirit and above all on having the men love him. It is the only dark spot of my happiness over here that we are going to be separated. But I realize that a good soldier goes where he is sent and does his best.

I went out last evening and said good-by to the platoon and informed them who was to be their leader and made my first *petit* speech. They were wonderful and would do anything for me, and I would always be happy to have lived with them and helped them whenever I could. I have found out one thing for certain. It isn't so much my education that has helped but my bringing up. F. R. A.

July 21

What a wonderful old world it is in spite of the war; how filled with interesting and beautiful things and interesting people. We are on our way to Paris on our own hook. What do you think of that? As I wrote you, our commissions came through on the 14th, but we continued with the company until last evening when we were summoned to regimental headquarters, given our discharges

## *ON THE FIELD OF HONOR*

from the army, the papers for our commissions, and told to report to Paris to learn the whereabouts of our new division. All of us shook hands with the Colonel, grabbed our papers, and started to make tracks for the nearest railroad station, a distance of some fifteen miles. This was about ten o'clock at night. We had not gone far when a big motor lorry came along. We hailed it, found it was going our way, and jumped in; a ride of two hours brought us to the town.

As long as I live I shall never forget that ride. It was a soft summer night, the sky twinkling with stars, and the ever beautiful moon high in the heavens. Our truck sped on down one of those wonderful French roads with its stately rows of sentinel trees, beyond which spread out beautiful rolling country, checkered fields and hedges, little clusters of houses, and off in the east the crest of the Vosges Mountains just discernible in the moonlight. The silence, the darkness, our speed of movement as the country unrolled itself before us, all gave me a thrill and a feeling of mystery, of big events to come. In our car were as happy a crowd of fellows as ever got together. There were about thirty of us, all commissioned after long, hard grinding in the ranks, all going through to Paris and on to our new assignment. The night rang with the old songs of the O. T. S. and Harvard football songs, which we shouted out with all our might.

## CHAPTER IV

As we rapidly sped away from the lines, every few minutes the three red stars of the Boche "all well" signal rose into the sky, quivered a minute, and went out. Very beautiful they were, those three blazing disks shooting up from the dark horizon behind us and spreading a red glow over the fields and woods below. We felt our spirits gripped by the mystery, the beauty, and significance of it all, speeding on into the night, a soft wind whipping into our faces as we rapidly passed the beautiful French countryside,—more beautiful and more mysterious in the moonlight,—the German rockets mounting into the sky behind us suggestive of our time spent up in the lines and a time soon to come when we shall see more of the Boche. Where were we going, what sort of men were we to be with, and what was to become of us? We knew nothing of all that, but there was the crowd together again, headed for the only place in France, Paris, to get a few days of pleasure and change. We were leaving for good our old outfits, whose officers and men we had come to know and of whom many were firm friends, going out into the night, where we knew not, but all happy with spirits high faring forth to face what might come our way.

It was wonderful this morning to step into a real railroad coach once more, and after three months of riding in freight cars to sink back into the plush upholstery of

## *ON THE FIELD OF HONOR*

a first class carriage. Unfortunately Al Angier is not going to Paris with us, as he has to stay in the same division as before, so we had to part at the station. Larry Austin and myself are going to stick together, but we sure did hate to have the last handshake with Al. He is a wonderful chap.

P. B. E.



## CHAPTER V

July 21

**Y**ESTERDAY I was an enlisted man up at the front with shells passing over every once in a while and living in old battered barns or out in the woods in a dug-out, and to-day I'm a commissioned Second Lieutenant traveling in a First Class Coach, *toute de suite* for Paris amid every luxury.

Yesterday afternoon I said good-by to the boys of my platoon and to our officers, and when I get back to the States I will tell you how wonderful each character is. It really broke my heart to leave.

We surely were a fine bunch of 2nd Lts. when we left the station, some with leather leggins and no bars, others with bars and nothing else, and all of us with the dirtiest torn Private's uniforms, but believe me we did n't do much worrying. The only sad part was parting with Al at the station. If ever you need a good faithful friend to pour your heart out to, it is over here in this game, and when things have gone a bit wrong he has been right at hand and we have sat out in the fields many Sundays writing to our Mothers and talking and enjoying Nature. He is assigned to the same division and I go far away, but in this game one goes where he is needed and says good-by cheerfully. It will be all the more wonderful when he and I come home together after the war.

F. R. A.

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

*July 21*

To continue the narrative, Paul Elliott, who is making the trip with me, and I jumped into a first class coach with our blanket-rolls under our arms. At noon we arrived at Nancy, where we had to stop until 8 p.m. Elliott and I jumped off the train just like kids off for a grand time. Fortunately we like just the same things, so it was n't at all hard to agree on things and then do them. First we stopped in on a French family and were invited to share their Sunday dinner. All the bread and butter we could eat, some fish cooked to perfection, with a delicious French sauce with onions and potatoes mixed in. Then the main course of green peas, potatoes, and roast pork, steaming hot, then the ever wonderful French salad, and for dessert apple jam: last, after-dinner coffee and a little chat while we passed around our Pall Mall cigarettes. We finished dinner about two and were so overjoyed to see a regular street car that we jumped aboard and went to the end of the route on the front platform just as in America. Then we went to the service at the cathedral, and later found a quiet little hotel where we had lemonade and cakes, and while one of us wrote letters the other enjoyed the luxury of a real hot water bath in a real bathtub. It is only after four months in the army that I have come to enjoy luxury, i.e., the proprietor let me know when my bath was ready and gave my shoes to the man who drew my

## CHAPTER V

bath to shine for me. Then supper at a little tea house, with ice cold orangeade, omelette, and bread and butter. No ice cream or ice cream soda has been found as yet, but to be sure I have been only asking and looking three and a half months.

F. R. A.

*July 22*

We are approaching Paris, and will be there in about an hour. It is all so wonderful that it seems I'm dreaming but I'm not, for opposite me in our fine compartment is the smiling face of Larry, and he and I are chatting with three French captains who are with us in this compartment. It's great fun to sit in an upholstered seat again and see flit by you the beautiful French country, — country over which you have hiked many a hike, in rain and shine and mostly in the long hours of midnight and early morning.

We've just stopped at a little station and bought some French papers. Isn't it wonderful, the French advance together with our men? Every one is wild with enthusiasm and Foch is lauded to the skies. He surely deserves it all and is the man of the hour.

I expect these next few days at Paris will be some of the most wonderful days of my life. Larry and I have lots in common; we are going to Notre Dame and the Louvre and the Opera, and intend to see everything we can. And we arrive in Paris at the very moment of what may be the

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

turning-point of the whole war, the crisis, when the great pendulum with irresistible force starts its movement in the other direction, gathering force as it goes and sweeping all before it. God grant it may be so, more for France's sake than our own country, which I think the war is at last waking up.

P. B. E.

July 28

I am writing this letter from the Harvard Bureau of the University Union. It is a very pleasant room, with desks and tables and easy chairs, the walls hung with Harvard banners, pictures of Presidents Eliot and Lowell, and scenes of the Stadium and crew races. A real bit of Harvard way off in France and a Godsend to men coming in from the front who want a quiet place to stay, where they may renew many old college acquaintances and get a real home atmosphere.

I have met lots of boys from my class in college here at the Union, and last night ran into a chap I never expected to see over here. This fellow, Faneuil Adams, had tried everything, but was unable to get into the American army. Right after college closed this spring, he came over and enlisted as a *poilu* in the French army. When you see a chap like that it makes you proud of your college and your countrymen. That's the kind of thing that Harvard stands for, the same kind of spirit that prompted

## CHAPTER V

John Gallishaw, after two years' service in the British army, when he was honorably discharged as unfit for duty after severe wounds, to go down to Texas, enlist there where the medical examination was not very strict, and then work his way into an R. O. T. C. and come out first in a list of 5500 men. He is here, sharing our room with Larry and me, and has just been commissioned as we all have. He is a remarkably wonderful chap.

P. B. E.

*July 31*

We are waiting here for a truck to take us to our new division. Left Paris yesterday morning early and pulled into this town, where the headquarters of our division is located, in the afternoon.

What a wonderful week in Paris we had! Larry knows a girl, Hanna Fiske, who is doing relief work among the refugees who come into Paris. We had a glorious party one night—a swell dinner at the “Café de la Paix” and then a box in the English theatre, where they put on a good little show called “The Mollusc.” The best part of the evening was to be together with American girls and chat about our country and our folks and forget that we were away from home and in a war.

The night before we left Paris we had one of the most interesting times we spent there. One of Larry's friends,

## *ON THE FIELD OF HONOR*

a fine fellow by the name of Manley, came to see us at the University Union. Manley had lived in Paris as a boy, and he took us to a fine old restaurant in the Latin Quarter which he knew thoroughly. We had a marvelous meal and then strolled into a little French cabaret. About eleven we started back to the club and, linked arm in arm, startled some of the quiet streets of Paris by rousing Harvard football songs. There is sure no place like old Harvard,—no college with memories and associations like hers, no college that's doing the work over here that she is.

P. B. E.

## CHAPTER VI

*August 1*

WE are all camped in the woods and it has been raining all night, and has just stopped long enough for me to drop you a birthday note. My new company is a peach of a company and mighty fine officers, but of course it will be some time before I can learn the men and really accomplish something, but time will prove everything, and it is all in the game of life which begins to be bigger and more worth while every day.

It is great to be all covered with mud again, after luxurious Paris with clean sheets and a bath, and you even feel more at home with stew and beans than with the wonderful Paris fare. We made a march last night, and as I marched at the rear of my men in my platoon, I realized they were really and truly my men, for the present at least, and it was my decisions and plans that held their lives safe.

I do love men, and if I can handle this job I shall return the happiest lad that ever crossed the seas.

F. R. A.

*August 4*

It is just about sunset and we are resting alongside the road,—a winding road on a hillside which slopes down to a beautiful river valley and rises abruptly on the oppo-

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

site side in a wood-fringed crest. Along the road a steady stream of transports, trucks, lorries, ammunition trains, and artillery is steadily moving forward—an endless stream that has been moving now for days, forward into the breach. The thin line of infantry extends along the road for miles, and similar lines stretch along all the roads in this sector, moving in one direction—northward. We shall move again when it becomes dark. Behind us a couple of observation balloons float lazily in the sky, while ahead, over the crest, the airplanes dart and circle, dodging the barrage and transmitting their observations to our artillery, which constantly rolls out its thunder. Every little hollow in the hills seems to have several guns hidden away. Now the sky in front is dotted with black puffs of smoke where the anti-aircraft shells have burst, and a couple of French planes are heading this way to get out of the fire which is becoming too hot for them. A signal outfit is passing on the road, leaving behind a line of wires which will soon pulsate with the orders, the messages, and the information necessary to keep in motion this vast body and coördinate the movements of the many units to make a fighting force out of what now appears to be an endless disorganized stream of men and vehicles.

Last night we were on the go for over twelve hours and had rather a tough time of it. It began to pour shortly after we started, and for ten solid hours the rain came



## CHAPTER VI

down in sheets. But the men showed wonderful spirit and I did n't hear a grumble, though most of them were all in and had been marching for twelve hours with full packs in the mud and rain.

A night like that is not uncommon and it's the hardest part of the infantry work, not the fighting but the long marches, the wetting for days when you have no other clothes, the standing under shell fire in the darkness,—no chance to see the enemy but just hearing the old *obus* come whistling down out of the air on you. Our men certainly show lots of gump and spirit, they're fine boys. This war game is one that shows you how white most men are, how big their hearts, how hardship brings out the best in them. I am sure that all these chaps will be much bigger in mind and spirit when they return home.

P. B. E.

*August 5*

And now I have the honor to state that I'm in the best company I have ever seen, under the best Captain I have ever seen, and with the finest fellows as Lieutenants with me I have ever seen. One is a Dartmouth man, one is a Harvard man, and one is a graduate of the great school of experience,—via the Spanish American War,—in other words, an old regular army cavalry-man, who still carries a Spanish bullet in his leg.

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

I have never been so blissfully happy. The surroundings are so pleasant and the work so interesting that life is one sweet dream. So I'm through with my kicking at army life,—I'm afraid I've done a lot of it in previous letters,—and have settled down to work. E. G.

*August 6*

I am lying under my shelter half in a little dug-out which my runner and I dug on a hillside. We are just under the brow of a steep hill, on the side away from the Boche, so that we are protected from his artillery fire. Below in a hollow is a line of six-inch howitzers and cannon which have been booming away over our heads all night. Just above us on the slope a battery of 75s have set up and crack away in continuous drum fire,—seems like a regular Fourth of July celebration.

It's sport to lie here and see the flash of the big guns below us, hear their crash, and follow the swish of the shell tearing its way thru the air until it lands kilos away in the Boche lines.

Two mighty nerry German planes just came over our heads, aiming straight for a couple of observation balloons in our rear. I had to admire the way they went thru our barrage and straight for the balloons who never had a chance. The observers dropped down in parachutes just as the Boche aviators, diving on them, poured into the

## CHAPTER VI

balloons a burst of machine-gun bullets. The balloons soon broke into flames and fell to the ground, while the airplanes headed straight back over our heads for their lines. We opened on them with about twenty-five machine guns and some anti-aircraft pieces, but they scooted safely thru a regular hail of bullets and got clear. It made us all sore, but they sure had lots of nerve to get away with it. The Germans are all fine fighters and thoroughly know the game.

I wish I could tell you, folks, how much home means to us out here, how we are always talking of what we will do when we get back, and of the loved ones there.

P. B. E.

*August 14*

Sitting in a little dug-out, just as the sun is setting, looking out far over the hills. All is quiet except an occasional volley from our artillery below us and once in a while a few scattered replies from the Boche. It is all so big and you feel as if you were in a big dream. A shell just landed in the midst of our transport and they are carrying two fellows across the field on a stretcher. It sure is wonderful how no one thinks of death or fears it. I have the finest bunch in my platoon, and I am living right with them and trying to get to know each one as soon as possible. Human nature is a wonderful thing, and there is

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

nothing more human than this bunch looking to you for advice and leadership all the time. I have a gas sentinel posted at night outside my little dug-out, and it is fine some of these moonlight nights to come out when everything is still and just sit and talk to him about home and his mother and what we are all over here fighting for and what we will do when we get back. Here is a little piece of poetry one of the boys showed me that he received from home:

*Just to be tender, just to be true,  
Just to be glad the whole day through,  
Just to be merciful, just to be kind,  
Just to be truthful as a child,  
Just to be gentle and kind and sweet,  
Just to be helpful with willing feet,  
Just to be cheery when things go wrong,  
Just to drive sorrows away with song,  
Whether the hour is dark or bright  
Just to believe that God knows best,  
Just in His promises to rest,  
Just to let love be our daily key,  
That is God's will for you and me.*

No matter what a man was before he entered the army, his ideals are almost sure to become better, for it is absolutely true that war brings out the finest qualities that may have been hidden way down deep.

Early morning with dew on the grass and the smoke going up in a thin line from our field kitchens below us. Our company goes up to the front line this morning.

## CHAPTER VI

Do you want a German helmet, or one of those splendid German Belts inscribed "*Gott Mit Uns*"? It is a great privilege to be where our boys have been doing such wonderful work and made the Boche run as they have never run before.

F. R. A.

*August 15*

I wish you could be over here to see the Kaiser beating it to the rear, and our friend Von Hindenburg also stepping on the throttle in the direction of Berlin. The Americans are the happiest bunch you can imagine, and when the Boche prisoners go by on the road you would think Barnum & Bailey's Circus was in town, to see the crowds gather and cheer. The German prisoners don't mind a bit. They enjoy the joke and shout back, "Finis Trenches," and we return the joke and shout back, "Finis Boche aussi and to Hell with your Kaiser." Even the stupid old mules we have to drag our kitchens seem to pick up their ears and say, Haw, Haw!

F. R. A.

*August 15*

I passed thru several villages which have come into our hands only within the last week,—every one of them the scene of fierce and bloody fights. You can have no idea of the devastation, the complete desolation, of these

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

pretty French villages which the artillery of each side has reduced to a battered mass of ruins; where the roofs and walls of the houses are still standing they are pitted with shell holes; of the rooms inside, perhaps one corner is left untouched with pictures on the walls, furniture standing, and in some places tables set with dishes and the remains of a meal still there: the other corner is a heap of rubbish, piles of stone and timber which have fallen from a gaping hole in the roof above. The roads are full of shell holes, gardens destroyed, fruit trees sawed down, and the beautiful shade trees shattered and torn by the hail of shells and bursting shrapnel they have suffered. Everywhere along the roads and in the houses are scattered old rifles and uniforms, equipment of all kinds left behind or abandoned in the struggle, piles of shells and empty shell cases, guns and cannon destroyed or deserted, everywhere waste, ruin, and destruction that makes one sick to look upon. How I pity the poor French inhabitants who will return to find their homes shattered masses of stone, in ruins as complete as if a mighty earthquake had leveled each house to the ground.

Yet the French will come back and immediately set about restoring their houses as best they can. In Chateau-Thierry the inhabitants followed the troops so closely that two days after the last German had been driven from the town the French families began to come back.

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Surely no people with such indomitable courage as that can ever be crushed or conquered.

Regimental Headquarters of the 110th, where I now am, is in an old chateau that has escaped shelling to any considerable extent. Before the Boche left they broke all the glass, smashed the furniture, and mutilated the rooms as much as they could. In a beautiful high-walled garden behind the chateau all the fruit trees lie beside their stumps,—sawed clean off for no other reason than pure spite and hellishness.

P. B. E.

*August 16*

To-night I am going up to the *Front Line for my first real time*, and I assure you it is very fine to be so near and to have the chance to stand up for the ideals I believe in and be on the side of Right and Justice. It is easy to see that one man's life is nothing if it came to a question of making the sacrifice for this high cause. Believe me, I am proud to be an American, because there never could be a more unselfish cause than the one Uncle Sam has openly supported to the limit. His boys have come over with absolutely one idea,—namely, to crush cruelty, barbarism, and make the world a happier, safer, and more peaceful place to live in, and then return home to their loved ones and leave untouched what there they found

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

with "Freedom to Worship God." I know these men will return finer, cleaner, straighter men. F. R. A.

Larry led his platoon safely to their section of the line the night of the sixteenth, and the next morning received an order detailing him to attend the Army Specialists School at Langes for a five weeks course.

*August 19*

You remember when it was time to go back to school in the fall, we kids began to have long faces and think the outlook was pretty glum—until the following summer. Here all is different, school means a wonderful rest and a chance to think and learn and coolly plan how it is best for a kid of twenty-one to face facts. I am longing to get hold of a book just to study and practice and learn. If only I had been to the front before my Officers' Training School in the States, I would have known how to appreciate every word the instructor offered,—how when leading my platoon along a road at one o'clock at night, all alone, with no higher officer at hand, I thanked Harvard and Lt. Morize and Col. Azan for their few words of advice as to what to do when the Boche opened up with his artillery on and all around that road. You really cannot understand the opportunity and duty that is up to every one of us. We have left our boys back at the front



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cheerfully keeping the Boche busy, while we, for two solid months, live in the fields of southern France, with the fields and gardens and quiet villages on all sides and your conscience asks you,—when you go back are you going to be able to help advise and lead the boys you left fighting for your country?

F. R. A.

*August 21*

By candle light in an old French fort. Oh, it is lovely here in a little living-room for the officers made just as homelike as any place I have ever been in, with little pictures on the walls and flowers and a big table with magazines and games.

But you forget everything except home as you listen to the piano with two big candles on each side of it and then dark all around. The wonderful old tunes resound up into the towers and down the stone corridors. They are playing “Memories.” It is wonderful, and I think of my childhood, and my family gave me the very happiest. Would n’t it be great if I could give them just as happy an old age. Believe me, this war makes you really appreciate everybody and everything. Somehow a Star of Happiness seems to be guiding me from one happy place to another. I am here for about six weeks to learn the newest methods of finishing the Boche and taking them back to the wonderful, brave, kind, generous, simple-minded

## *ON THE FIELD OF HONOR*

trustful boys I left, back where the dead Boche and dead horses are rotting everywhere and the shells filled with a rotten gas are coming over at all times and leave blisters all over the body and try to get the lungs of the poor boys. They are playing "The End of a Perfect Day," and it makes you wish you were back there with them watching this big wonderful August moon rise over the barbed wire and swamps. Instead, I am here in the loveliest part of France with every luxury, with the moon streaming through narrow windows and spreading out on the floor between huge arches. I feel as if I were in a dream; just think I am back at college again with all its opportunities and friendships. There are one thousand officers in this ideal college, all working in the same cause. In my class there are forty-five. We are specializing in the Stokes Mortar and One-Pounder Cannon. It is mighty interesting with the best American, French, and English instructors, and I hope I make a good standing because when I go back these two methods are a very excellent way of disposing of Boche in bunches.

They are playing "The Sunshine of Your Smile," so let's forget about the Boche. I am in a very beautiful spot on the summit of a round, smooth hill, where by going away from the crowd I can sit under a little tree with the wind blowing gently. And I can just think and look below into the valleys on all sides. In the early morning

## CHAPTER VI

the sun rises with the smoke streaming out of the chimneys of the little villages nestled among the pines and hollows. And after a day's work and drill I sit after supper and see the sun sink below the trees and the moon come up like a big red ball. Everything is quiet and peaceful, and there is nothing to break the silence but the "chu-chu" of an evening train winding from village to village, bringing the young girls and old men back from their work in the larger towns to their homes. Thank God they know naught of War down here where the birds are happy and the cows and sheep graze without being harmed.

I don't know why I have written all this stuff, but the music has just guided my pencil, and after battered towns, dead bodies, suffering families, and devastated fields, all you most think of is love and beauty.

F. R. A.

*August 27*

Well, most of the Company moved after a ride on the train on trucks to our new camp, but yours truly, being a new "louey," was put in charge of the leavings of the battalion (a few left-overs) and hiked with the regimental transports for four days. It was some trip, but any one with experience with troops will tell you that Infantry should never march with a transport. It was most discouraging because of halts and delays. We were right in

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

the middle of the divisional transport, and it was one of the most wonderful things I have seen. I should say the whole thing was a few miles long and stretched back along the road as far as you could see. There was the artillery, the ammunition train, supply train, machine-gun transport, and infantry transport (each company had individually a rolling kitchen, a water cart, a ration limber, an ammunition limber, and a G. S. wagon for miscellaneous stuff). Our route lay across the battlefields of one of the late pushes and this alone was a wonderful sight for a novice and, as Pop would say, —I'll tell you all about it when I get home. Nevertheless, the Boche had his wind up and sure turned tail and beat it across France here. Let's hope he don't stop, and by the way, from what I hear now, the British have him running.

Well, I at last reached my Company again and delivered my detail of "duds" to our respective companies. A little later we started in on our tour in the line and a diet of "corned woolly" and hard tack. (When I get back to the States where I can laugh at a can of woolly without fear, I'll have a can of it set up on a pedestal where I can thumb my nose at it every day just for the sake of Auld Lang Syne.) Let me say right here that we often while in support positions get fresh vegetables and meat, but you see up front there can be no cooking because of the smoke which would draw artillery fire. Artillery is more

## CHAPTER VI

active here, of course, than before in my last sector and the guns boom constantly. Many curious things happened from the action of these shells and of course many sad—but here is a funny thing I heard of. A limber and two mules was going along and a shell landed right between the front legs of one of the mules. It blew the mules apart right out of the harness and sent the driver flying out of the seat,—but never injured either the mules or the driver!

Most of the time I did not live in a trench, but in a hole dug in the ground and covered over. I guess they expect to move forward soon, so there are no trenches being built, but Fritz has no trenches either. I suppose when we settle down for the winter we'll have trenches.

I just missed getting into a scrap one morning. I unfortunately was sent back to the rear on a job by the Major. ( Incidentally I took back some Boche prisoners to deliver to the authorities. ) The Boche began cutting up and my platoon had a chance to get into action. Several prisoners were taken and many of the boys had a chance to get their Boche, and are now sporting an Iron Cross. I was sorry as the deuce I did not get into it with them.

A. E. A.

## CHAPTER VII

*August 29*

SOON after my taking up my new duties we moved — a long jump — to a new sector, — a sector much more active and right in the thick of things. We went up to the line in our turn. Nothing happened until just before we came out; then one morning, just at dawn, the Germans put over a barrage, and followed up with a determined attack.

We had quite a scrap, but I can tell you only this, — I had several narrow escapes and yet was never even scratched. Now the battalion is back at rest and mail long delayed has been handed over to us to devour. To-day, as I was buried in my mail, came an order sending me to a school near here, — a two weeks' course in just the work I like, so I am very happy.

Now, more than ever, there are so many things that I'd like to tell you about that I can't, — inside dope, — real stuff! But now, more than ever, I am on my honor to keep such things secret. All goes well, I mean the War in general, — and I really begin to hope that we are approaching the end.

The mail, — what a pure delight it was. I sat down and arranged it all chronologically and then opened each one with joy.

Two queer things, proving the essential smallness of

## CHAPTER VII

the world, have happened. When I joined the Company I was told that there was one officer away on detached service; I thought nothing of it, but the other day he came back and behold it was Dick Small,—Harvard '16,—a fraternity brother of mine. What a reunion we had talking over old times. It made it very pleasant for both of us because we were the closest friends during my junior year.

Again, I was opening one of Pa's letters and out popped a little booklet entitled "The Angier Idea." Albert Angier, who was commissioned with me in this battalion, said—"Hello, there's one of my father's booklets." And so he asked me to have Pa copy out such parts of Langstaff's letter as pertain to the battalion in general (he is in L Company) and send these to his Father, explaining how it came about. That will be another way his people hear about him, indirectly.

I won't be with my company now for some time,—detached at this school,—and I expect a good rest and profitable schooling. So cheer up and don't worry. I am disgracefully safe and like the Boston Garter, "No metal can touch me."

Got a wonderful box of fudge from Kathleen Kinney, which was brought to me when we were having an officers' meeting and was consumed as follows:

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

<i>The Colonel</i>	18 <i>pieces</i>
<i>The Major</i>	10 <i>pieces</i>
<i>Four Captains (each)</i>	8 <i>pieces</i>
<i>Sundry Lieuts. (each)</i>	4 <i>pieces</i>
<i>Myself</i>	3 <i>pieces</i>

But we sure did enjoy it, particularly the Colonel.

E. G.

This was the last letter Gene wrote. He completed his course at school on the fourth of September and hastened back to his company, which was just beginning a fierce engagement north of Fismes.

Only a few days before he had received his promotion to 1st Lieutenancy, and it is noteworthy that he was the youngest First Lieutenant in the 77th Division. The following is quoted from a letter of Lieutenant John Taylor, 308th Infantry, to Eugene's father:

“Lieutenant Galligan was in command of Co. K, 308th Infantry, from the 5th of Sept. until the morning of the 9th, when he met a hero's death. On Sept. 5 we had a particularly fierce engagement with the Huns. Lieutenant Bampton was then in command of Co. K. At 6 a.m. we attacked the Hun, and our whole battalion was simply swept by machine-gun fire, and to make matters worse the Hun artillery opened on us and our casualties were unusually severe. We were fully exposed to our front



## CHAPTER VII

and a big Hun observation balloon a mile away could see our every move. Lieutenant Bampton was sent to the rear severely shell-shocked. I was commanding Co. I and was on the right of Co. K in the attack. We were forced to fall back to a sunken road and a railroad embankment to gather our scattered forces together.

“Your son came to us, having been away at school, just at the critical time. With but a few men of Co. K that could be found he volunteered to go forward that night at dusk with the rest of us. After a heavy artillery preparation we forced our way through the German lines and reached the Butte de Bourmont, a high hill near the town of Revillon. This is about six miles north of Fismes, a city on the Vesle River. We were up close to the Aisne River and the Chemin-des-Dames, a formidable ridge paralleling the river on the north side. On the morning of Sept. 6th we were dug-in in a small wood close to the Aisne River. Your son and I had the same Headquarters as our two companies were quite close together. That night we moved back to the high hill called the ‘Butte de Bourmont,’ on the side of which was an excellent trench system built by the French some time during the war. His company took the left half of the trench and mine the right sector. We had a good dug-out, well protected by heavy timber, in the centre of our sectors.

“On Sept. 8th, just before dark, your son with his com-

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

pany and I with mine were sent over to the right of our position to attack Revillon, a Hun stronghold. There is an open plain there for one thousand yards and we used darkness to cover our advance. Company L and Company M were in support right behind us. We got away in fine style and had machine guns on the high hill behind us peppering the Hun line, firing over our heads as we advanced. We kept a fine skirmish line and did not have a casualty while crossing to the Hun barbed wire. We got over the wire in the dark, and then trouble started. Bright flares came up from all directions and we would fall flat on our faces so as not to be seen. Soon we got into a Hun first-line trench which was very shallow. At this point the Huns started to enfilade our flanks with machine-gun fire. There were no Huns in that first trench, but suddenly, while I was having a conference with your son as to our next move, one of my men from the left flank cried out, 'We have a prisoner!' As this was my first Hun prisoner I wanted to see him and, through an interpreter, question him as to the number of machine guns in our direct front. I ran along the top of the bank until I came to where he was. A couple of my men had him sitting down on the bottom of the trench. A flare came up and I saw his face distinctly. Just as I got my interpreter seated to quiz him there was a sudden commotion in the trench and a terrific explosion. In some way a Hun had crept up a communi-

## CHAPTER VII

cating trench which we had n't seen in the dark and, hearing his comrade giving away information, he put a live hand grenade in his comrade's lap,—meaning to kill him, for dead men tell no tales. It went off with terrible effect, for the prisoner had his body badly mangled and my interpreter lost one foot. By a miracle I escaped serious injury. My sergeant saw the Hun trying to get back after doing his dirty work and emptied his automatic into him. Needless to say, he was n't worth picking up.

“Just at that time we received an order to retire back to the hill, as an attack had failed over to the right of our battalion sector. We got back, prisoner and all. I was taken to a first aid station and later in the ambulance to a field dressing station. I saw your son just before I left Battalion Headquarters to go to the rear. He wished me good luck, and I thanked him. The next morning I was plenty strong enough and returned to my company to find that early that morning in an advance trench your son met a swift end by a high explosive shell. He showed unusual courage and was a shining example to the men. I felt as though I had lost a lifetime friend and I had known him but a short while. I'll say this for your son,—he would never send his men where he would n't go himself. He was always calm and cheerful, even under shell-fire, and was a noble example of a Christian young man. He was loved by all who knew him, and his men worshipped the

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

ground he walked on. They tell me he died with a smile on his face, with the light of Heaven in his eyes."

The following letter was written to Dr. Galligan by Lieutenant Howell D. Stevens:

"The only time I had the good fortune to meet your son was Aug. 20th, on the Vesle. Eugene had just come out of the line. He had been on continuous duty for three days and four nights and was naturally very much exhausted. His company, which had been on outpost duty across the Vesle, had been attacked by a whole German battalion and had suffered very severe losses. Your son was too modest to speak of his own personal exploits in the attack, but I learned from several of the men in his platoon that he not only displayed heroic courage but also excellent judgment in the crises. And praise coming directly from a Lieutenant's own men (who are usually prone to criticise their immediate superiors) means infinitely more than any tribute a general or colonel could possibly pay.

"On Aug. 20th he was cheerful and smiling even after the terrific strain to which he had been subjected. I never saw him after that. He was at the head of his platoon when the end came.

"I have never heard one ill word spoken about Eugene by any officer or man in the regiment. He was loved in life and revered in death. No man who went to France

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had a finer record in the line than he. His memory is and ever will be enshrined in the hearts of his men. He was a true American, a loyal patriot, and a real crusader in a Great Cause.”

Appreciations of Eugene’s noble character and high-minded life could be multiplied many fold, but there is no need. His life and death speak for themselves. He lived a happy life, appreciating the beautiful, always giving the best in him to his world and so always getting the most out of that world. He was much admired at school and college, and all who met him became his friends. He did not seek popularity, it came to him naturally. His short career in the army won him rapid promotion and the love of all his men and associates. Bravely he met the last great test of a soldier, unflinching, “with a smile on his face ” he laid down his life to uphold the Right.

Colonel WHITTLESEY:

“I knew him intimately and admired him immensely.”

Captain GRAHAM:

“He would not send his men where he would not go himself.”

A LIEUTENANT of the 308<sup>th</sup>:

“There was no better or braver officer serving under the flag than Lieutenant Eugene Galligan.”



*First Lieutenant Eugene Galligan*





## CHAPTER VIII

*August 29*

THERE is always something to keep your interest up while you're up there. When we started back we thought it all over, but we had gone about a kilometre through woody roads,—then out into a field,—when we began to see shells burst ahead of us to the right. It was dark and I was leading the Company out, in a long column. We veered to the left and it seemed that the Boche moved his fire to the left. The shells were whistling over and dropping ahead of us pretty steadily when one went “Whiz-zz-zz Bam!” Down we flopped and the pieces went flying just over our backs a few yards away and not a man hurt! I thought to myself, “that’s a bit close,”—so we about-faced and back to the woods with gas masks on, for he had mixed a bit of mustard into the barrage he had laid down on the road ahead of us. I gathered in all the sheep when we reached the woods, and we went on our way again after things had quieted down a bit. We landed back in camp O. K. with only two men gassed after passing through nothing else but a thunder-storm. It’s a great life, doggone it! I don’t see how anything is going to worry me when I get back to the States,—ordinary troubles will be pleasures!

I just missed getting into a scrimmage with the Boche, but unfortunately was not with the Company when they

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got into it. It happened I was taking some Boche prisoners back to the rear. A few of the officers now have some iron crosses, Boche pistols, field glasses, etc. for souvenirs.

One Lieutenant captured a Boche machine gun single handed and then had it turned about the other way. One of the boys in my Company got a piece of shrapnel in the hand,—and just then a Boche Red Cross man came along, so they captured him and had him dress it. They said he did a good job.

The prisoners I have seen are not bad looking,—but they are by no means big, strong fellows. They look sort of meek and tired and not sorry to be taken. There were one or two young ones in the bunch.

A. E. A.

*August 30*

Tell Don that the Infantry is the hardest game of the lot. We get all the hard work and the “dough-boys” will deserve the glory when they get back. The Infantry is making the real fight and suffering the real hardships,—but in many ways I’m glad I chose it, and, by gosh, I’m going to ‘stick! Trust in God, Mother, to bring us all through.

A. E. A.

*Extracts from Diary of A. E. A.*

*August 1.* Heard we are about to leave Meriel to-night for fourteen mile hike. Rest all day. Marched to Damas

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au Bois in fine style. This Company marches much better than others in 305th. As we marched along through a French town I heard a Scotch air whistled and then a voice,—“Gud nicht, laddies.” Some life. This in France. All nationalities.

*August 14.* Nothing happens. Sleeping in holes under the noses of a blooming battery.

*August 15.* Same.

Several never-to-be-forgotten days, ten as support Company of first line. Lts. Case and Garde killed. Moved back at last away from corned woolly, salmon, and sand to Bois de Pisotte—then back beyond Sergy only to return in a couple of days to Blue line with Company M and Lt. Miles. Examined for promotion. Scarcity of officers,—not alone casualties, but relieved and returned to the States as instructors.

*September 4.* The Boche pulled out in evening and we crossed the Vesle, following 2nd Battalion. Marched all night. Two hours rest. Passed thru Bn. in advance.

*September 5.* In morning this Company in first wave ran into Boche east of Merval. Machine guns stopped us on a line already registered by their artillery. Fell back to road in evening. Major McNeil took Bn. forward thru Several to Woods north of Butte de Bourmont. Lt. Miles

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

to hospital. I took command of Company. Right in among Boche M'G's and batteries.

*September 7.* Missed a crack at twelve Boche who pulled out from hill behind us and walked off with one of our liaison posts on road.

*September 8.* In a.m. had narrow escape while patrolling woods on flank with two men, one of whom was wounded by snipers. In evening attacked Boche in front of Revillon—very short notice. Fell back to wood. Machine-gun fire too strong. Only three of original Bn. officers left.

*September 10.* Received notice of promotion to 1st Lieut.

*September 11.* Woke up after first night's sleep in six days. Had had but four or five hours sleep in six days,—literally,—but somehow felt pretty well just the same. Probably the good food we've been having,—our kitchens coming up saved the situation.

..

*September 2*

This is a queer War we are fighting here. To-day, we are in a woods back in support, resting and digging. This a.m. I stretched my limbs in a cold and clammy dug-out, a hole about six by four feet and four deep, covered over with limbs and dirt. That was about 7.30 a.m.,—the Company was getting chow outside. We can cook

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over open fires here being careful about smoke and not lighting a fire before daybreak. Well, soon, my striker informed Lieutenant Miles and myself that breakfast was ready and we crawled out, put on our gas masks and helmets and we were dressed for breakfast. Toast, bacon, coffee and jam. The latter is enjoyed mostly by hornets, who flock about and incidentally drown themselves in the coffee. One this morning rode on a piece of toast and jam to my mouth, then sat down hard on my upper lip, which is now swollen and sore.

After breakfast I went out to where the Company is digging, then looked over our position to take in case of attack, and returned to camp for the rest of the morning to read and write. About 1 p.m. we had noon mess. Steak, fried potatoes, toast, jam, celery, and coffee. You say "Not bad, eh!" No, not so worse, considering. We're feeding pretty well. I am just getting over an attack of dysentery I got in the front line last time in. This food and a little exercise sets one up again.

Well, after noon mess, we picked out a place for a Company Headquarters dug-out and, expecting to stay here a few days, we are having a real one made with *beaucoup* dirt on top. These lighter holes are good protection against anything except a direct hit. We're putting two layers of logs and dirt over our new one, which ought to stop a direct hit by a 77, or whizz-bang, and maybe a 105.

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

These old whizz-bangs are great stuff and I'll say they get one's wind up. You hear the report of the gun, then immediately whizz-bang! It may be three hundred yards off or twenty-five yards. There's little time to pick out a hole,—just make yourself look like a pancake,—but you feel as big as a barn door.

Just for excitement, a big limber went down the road a few yards from us just before I started this letter. We heard a whiz-z-z (sort of increases in speed as it gets near you,—then—a pause and) Bam! Just over, by gosh! We all make a bee-line for our holes just like rabbits or prairie-dogs when a train goes by. A few dropped short along the road and we curse the limber for moving in daylight! Things quiet down and we stick our heads out, look around, and crawl out.

About thirty minutes later. It is now evening mess time. Here's hoping it's another substantial meal! At this point in letter a Boche plane flies over. Machine guns and arch-ies poop off at it and we take cover to avoid falling pieces of shrapnel. Such is life for the Infantry at rest! Few casualties,—but now and then a heart throb.

A. E. A.

*September 3*

Well, Mr. Ward, I picked a winner when I picked the Infantry, and to tell you the truth,—although I have not,

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of course, told my family this,—a Lieutenant of Infantry has not got much of a show in this game. You probably realize this from what you have already seen of the war. I am going to put all I have into it, and God grant that I get back home, if it's only for my family's sake. When it's over, if I am still on deck, I'll know that I've done as much as anybody to knock out the beast, and if I pay the big sacrifice, my family can rest assured that I have not flinched in my duty.

A. E. A.

This letter to Mr. Ward is one of the last Al wrote. Not rushing blindly ahead without counting the sacrifice, but fully realizing that he would probably not return, Albert steadfastly and cheerfully kept on, a wonderful example to his men of coolness and courage under fire, of utter fearlessness.

During the early days in September Albert had command of his company and led them through the fiercest kind of fighting. He received his promotion to a First Lieutenancy on the 10th of September, less than two months after being commissioned.

The 12th of September the Battalion—what was left of them—"went over" on an attack on Revillon, a very well organized and heavily defended German strong point which had repulsed all previous attempts of the Americans to capture it. Once before Al's battalion had at-

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

tacked and almost taken Revillon, but had finally been forced to retire because of failure of units on the flank to reach their allotted objective. Al, at the head of his men, led them over the open ground which they must cross to reach Revillon, subjected to a deadly raking fire from German machine guns and snipers. Soldiers all around him were hit; an automatic rifleman fell wounded. Al picked up his *chauchat* and rushed on, encouraging his men and firing the gun as he advanced. Only a few minutes later Albert himself was hit, and though mortally wounded, retained consciousness. His sergeant, who was following behind, took him in his arms but Albert ordered, —“ Lay me down and look after the other men.” Even at that time, with a fatal wound, he thought so little of himself and so entirely for his men that he refused aid in order that others might have it. Brave and unselfish to the last, Albert, at the very moment of his death, insisted that to some of his less seriously wounded soldiers be given the assistance of which he himself was in the gravest need. To the nobility of a heroic death, he added that last act of self-sacrifice.

Lieutenant Taylor wrote: “I arrived on the scene with reinforcements, having been ordered up just a few minutes after, and I will never forget the look in that boy’s face. The smile was still there.”



## CHAPTER VIII

Albert once told Larry that one of his principles was this, that:

*"It is better to die for an ideal and live forever,  
Than live for nothing and die forever."*

It is given to few of us to live up to our ideals, but Albert's full, happy life left nothing unfulfilled. He will surely "live forever" with all who knew him.

He always won the love of his associates at home, at school, and in the army. Schoolmates at Thacher write: "Albert's straightforward manliness, good judgment, and warmhearted kindness early won us to him, and time has only served to increase his place in our affections."

From the very first, all in C Company of the 305th, both officers and men, respected and admired him. Quiet and unobtrusive, he did his work thoroughly and well and was ever ready to help out some one else when his own work was finished. In the signal school which Al and I had in the company for training runners and liaison agents, he quickly gained the men's confidence, and had endless patience and care for those who did not get on to the work easily. The men implicitly trusted him and he was always able to settle any disputes or disagreements, both sides seeming to be satisfied with what he thought was the right. They knew he was absolutely fair and impartial.

Captain O'Shea of Company C writes, in a letter to

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Albert's Father: "I had the pleasure of personally knowing Lieutenant Angier, while he was attached to this Company awaiting his commission. I had the benefit of his assistance, his inspiring example to the men, his cheerfulness and faithfulness to duty,—and sorrow, too, on his departure to join the 308th. I have indeed the sorrow that is yours, but the pride in knowing that he gave his life in a cause in which he so firmly believed. May I say,—and I do say so honestly,—I express not only my own sorrow but the sympathy and sorrow of my entire Company. With us he still lives and shall ever live,—he has not gone from us but lives in eternal happiness."

Larry Austin, in one of his letters home, dated June 25th, said: "My chum, Albert Angier, is doing wonderfully well,—he is in Company C, in charge of the liaison work in his Company, and we get together every Saturday night and Sunday to talk over College, home, and news, and we understand one another and are really still the same good friends, and I guess that War or nothing else can separate us. He is a *man*, and his Mother would be proud to see how fine a man, and with what fine ideals he is working and helping every one he comes in contact with. His cheerfulness and fairness have won the love and trust of all Company C, and when he gets his commission they will lose one of their best boys. If any one of you see his Mother, I would like to have you tell her how fine and

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straight a path her son—my best friend—is following in this game.”

Al played the game of the soldier and officer as he played the game of life, cleanly, fairly, taking no advantage and asking none, keeping his soul pure and his mind high, living up to his ideals, and when the time came cheerfully sacrificing his life that these ideals might live.

LIEUTENANT ALBERT E. ANGIER

*Living—On the Field of Honor*

. . .

*Gentle, courteous, sweet and brave,  
His duty shone like a splendid star,  
Guiding him far over misty seas  
As Freedom's Pledge in the shock of war.*

*Blending his blood with the best in France,  
His life a gift to the cause he chose,  
Facing the East with a stubborn pride,  
Ringed by a circle of field gray foes.*

*Knowing his love for the God of Right,  
Glimpsing his heart as he paid the price,  
Ours is not to mourn his loss  
Nor count the cost of his sacrifice.*

*Ours to take up the Broken Threads  
From the hands that might not complete the skein,  
Ours to finish the task begun  
That our dead, who slumber, may live again.*

HARRY C. WALKER

#### CITATION FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

1st Lieut. ALBERT E. ANGLER (deceased) 308th Infantry — on September 14th, 1918, in the attack near *Reuillon* when his Battalion advanced, this Officer, in command of a platoon of Company M, 308th Infantry, continued to lead his men though wounded. By his own personal courage and example, he urged them forward through enemy wire to their objective. Even when mortally wounded, he continued to direct the consolidation of his platoon's position, refusing medical attention in favor of others who had a better chance to live than himself.



*First Lieutenant Albert Edgar Angier*  
*U.S.C.*



## CHAPTER IX

*September 5*

**I**T being Saturday I shall celebrate with my friend Bill Manley in Langes, where, if it is a starlight evening, we can walk around the walls of the city built in the time of the Romans and gaze down on the plains and villages far below. We have engaged the same room I had the first week with my friend, Lt. Rodenbeck. I feel positive Bill will fall in love with my little girl (age 13) and her splendid mother. I shall pretend she is Kia and bring her some little surprise. I am looking forward to helping her with English because she studies so hard and is so keen and bright.

Yes, as you know by this time, Al and I are separated, but never can be separated in thought and we keep in touch by mail, and as you know we are all tearing all over France, continually meeting fellows we know, so I really expect to see him some time soon.

F. R. A.

*September 10*

I shall have to ask you to help me out. I am like the little old woman who lived in a shoe and had so many children she did n't know what to do. Just after supper I received the most precious bundle of mail direct from Paris, and once I got it into my hands I thrust it into my innermost pocket, right near my heart. Then to the little

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open fire and dark little corner and lamp. It is a dark and stormy night and the wind is whistling through the arches and the rain is pattering against the windows and the clouds rush by the hidden moon. Just a wonderful night to spend with those you so often think of. F. R. A.

*September 10*

It is very very late so I must blow out the candle and say good-night. I say my prayers and I know you are listening to them. Each night I pray mostly that you are all happy and it is wonderful to know that you are thinking of me, but I should be sad if I thought you were worrying because there is not a single blessed thing to worry about when God is here to look after things. F. R. A.

*September 13*

While you are away your friends and family count for more and more, and they become your favorite topic for thought and bond between friends.

To-night Bill Manley and I had our farewell party at the little home I wrote you about in the village. We prepared a little treat and packed our Musette Bags and set down the hill just at sunset. We arrived just as they were preparing supper, Mother, Father, Aunt, and Daughter. We always shake hands and spend the evening as if we were part of the family, and leave with happy hearts,



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because we have done some little thing to change the monotony of their life and they have filled us with clean thoughts of the dear country peasant of France.

They knew it was my last night and kind of expected we might get down for supper. Germaine was lovelier than ever with her cheery laugh and smile, and wore a beautiful simple frock she must have made herself, so spotless and fresh. Her mother had a corking supper, fresh bread, omelet, and salad. It takes a long time for supper because we chat with Pater, Bill chats and kids me along, and I smile and look wise and throw in a monosyllable every once in a while. We took out a fat seegar to offer "Old Scout," when Germaine went quietly to the cupboard and what do you think she brought forth—a great big sugar-plum pie! It was a wonderful pie—but what won our hearts was the spirit in which it was given. They probably haven't been so lavish since the beginning of the war. We made them happy just eating it as we would at home.

It was great when we said good-by and they wished us good luck and we knew how sincere it was. It is so much more fun to carry away to the front a happy friendship than a couple of wild days in Paris. F. R. A.

This is a letter to Charlie Eliot, whom Larry, on his way back from Langes, met for a few minutes in Paris when

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Charlie was on his way back to the States after driving an ambulance on the Italian front.

*September 17*

Please carry across the sea all the love straight from my heart to all those who mean so much to me. Please see my mother in Jamaica Plain, or if you arrive before October, try and see her or write her in Cataumet.

You can explain in words what I can't express in writing, that to a fellow who is over here his family and the friends he left behind are his little world he works for and thinks of every minute. I have been so happy every minute of the time I have been over here and one of the finest things was just to see you for one little second,—so you can tell my message to them.

It's a fellow's family and friends who make a fellow, and there are some friends that can never be forgotten through time, distance, or lack of liaison. F. R. A.

*September 21*

Am back with the company again, and we are in the heart of the largest and most wild and beautiful forest in France. It reminds me somehow of Maine, but everywhere there are tall oaks instead of pines. It is a lovely September afternoon with the clouds floating by through the opening in the trees and trees bending to the gentle breeze. Another Lieutenant and I are sitting at a little

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table censoring mail and making a few notes on the organization of our platoons.

I have so much good news to tell you I don't know where to begin. First and foremost is that Al Angier has been promoted to a First Lieutenant and has been in command of his company for several weeks and is also in marvelous health. Next, the 77th Division is right here with us in the same forest, and yesterday I went over and saw my old D Company, 305th, and I needn't tell you how wonderful it was to see them all again, especially Lieutenant Tweedy, who is now Captain Tweedy of the Company, and all the boys in my 3rd Platoon. They all told me their little private history. Just the ones I had picked as real men have done real men's work. Gee, I was thrilled!

Then last night the officers in my present company and the other officers in the companies next door got together and in a little dug-out, by candle-light, I heard all the news of our battalion. I had the loveliest chat with Holly Whitney, who has been acting Captain of H Company for the past week,—he is a wonderful fellow and corking soldier. He told me about Gus Aspinwall and what a splendid leader he was,—it seems Gus was taking a patrol of twenty men and the Germans spotted him with a machine-gun bullet. Gus was just as calm after he was hit and simply told his men to go right ahead

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

with their work. When our boys could get out to them they gave Gus a little burial right on the Field of Glory where I am sure he will be happy.

F. R. A.

*September 22*

I just must tell you about my boys while I was away at school. I can't tell you in writing just what I think of them, and when they get back to a training area and I have a chance to tell them and give them a little picnic of some sort, you bet I will do it. In the first place, when I left for school, the two fine sergeants I wrote you about assumed complete command of the platoon, and they were just the finest men you can picture in your mind.

Well, the word came down for the advance and my platoon was picked to be the very first wave. At the appointed time, my sergeants had the men all organized and ready and off they went, each sergeant at the head of his section. And when all was over they had gained two kilos of ground and each man had fought his battle forward; staying cutting the barbed wire with machine guns spraying all around, they got through, captured the machine guns at the top of the hill, dug into the hill, and were then O. K. with the Germans yelling "Camerade," waving white handkerchiefs, and giving themselves up. One of my sergeants got a bullet through his right arm. But he just stopped and tied it up a bit and caught up to

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the head of the line and had the Germans just terrorized, bayoneting nine even though his right arm wasn't much good. He is now in the hospital and writes he is just longing to get back with the boys, and every one of the boys was just like him. My personal runner and the chap that looks after my little hut and equipment went over the top right with the sergeant, and what do you think he carried on his back? Two cans of peaches and chocolates and cigarettes for the platoon when they captured the new position. He is very funny when he tells me all about it. One bullet went through the can of peaches and the juice ran down his trouser leg, and when he was cutting the barbed wire it made a corking barricade for the bullets to go through the chocolates. My head sergeant was one of the boys killed, and there never was a more beloved or braver boy in our whole splendid country. God knows how little I can do to make his wife forget, but I am writing her a little letter by candle-light just to tell her how much the boys loved him and how much he did for their happiness and comfort.

There is nothing rotten about this war and all the pictures you see in the magazines are bunco, because you just live like a happy family, and as long as you know your own family at home is well and happy you can do anything. The ideals of the men are so fine that it is just Heavenly work to be their Lieutenant. F. R. A.

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

*September 25*

It is half-past nine and I am in the loveliest little dug-out writing by candle-light. At 10.30 we move up on to the line, and after a four-hour bombardment we go ahead. It is my first, and all I pray is that I am worthy of the trust of my boys and the trust of you all at home. My boys are the finest of our whole splendid country, and I realize many are not to return, but they have a spirit of love that can never die. Just before supper we assembled under an oak tree and I told them everything and that the only thing that counted was to do their best for those they loved at home.

They are singing and playing cards up there now with their rifles all cleaned and pistols ready. Just simple farmers ready to give whatever sacrifice is asked of them. I shall never be more happy than as the leader of these boys if I am worthy.

I am not writing this to my mother or to any one but just you, for I know you understand. In this game as a platoon leader the chances are pretty good of being killed, but it is the dandiest of them all, and please tell my mother, if anything does happen, how much I loved them.

My memories of my friends at home and the little picture of my mother in my inside pocket make me just happy.

F. R. A.

## CHAPTER IX

Larry wrote home nothing of the part he played in the terrible two weeks of fighting in which the 109th participated in the Argonne Forest, but he was one of three officers left with the regiment at the time of the relief who had been through every bit of the fighting, in the front line all the time. Left in command of his company early in the engagement, when his Captain was detailed to mop up heavy woods on our left flank, he led his men forward through concentrated German trench mortar, *minne-werfer*, machine-gun, and artillery fire. They kept "pushing" for days without food; wet to the skin by cold driving rains the second day out, they were never dry for two weeks thereafter, and at night when not advancing flopped down in muddy shell-holes to sleep or shiver. For several days Larry with his men had the very important position of contact patrol or advance guard for our regiment. He was sent ahead to locate and first come in contact with the Boche lines. This mission he accomplished with great skill and success, and sent back several messages which allowed our artillery to clear the ground ahead and thus make possible the advance of the rest of the regiment.

I was at regimental headquarters when Larry reported back to the major when his patrol was called in, and I shall never forget how he looked as he came into the dug-out. Haggard from loss of sleep, scratched and

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bloody, soaking wet, his clothes literally hanging in ribbons, torn to shreds by the barbed wire, he marched in with a great smile on his face, cheerful and happy as he could be, and would hardly wait for the major to finish his instructions, so eager was he to be back on the line with his “boys.”







*Lieut-Colonel James Andrew Shannon*  
*U. S. G.*

## CHAPTER X

WHEN at college in the spring and summer of 1917, we had the great privilege of working under Captain Shannon, who had come to Harvard to take charge of the military training. By his simplicity, his earnestness, his high-minded devotion to duty, he soon won our love. He typified the perfect officer and gentleman, and I know we all took him as our example in preparing ourselves to become officers, and all would have asked nothing more than to go into battle under his leadership.

During the first week in the Argonne, the 109th had suffered extremely heavy casualties both in officers and men. We had had three different commanding officers in four days. On October 1st the third regimental commander was sent back because of sickness and exhaustion, and Captain Shannon, now a Lieutenant-Colonel, came up to lead the regiment in the drive, the crisis of which was just approaching. Colonel Shannon had been stationed at G. H. Q. in a very responsible position, but after many requests for front line duty was given a regiment on the line.

Late in the afternoon of October 1st, Colonel Shannon arrived at the regimental P. C. — an open dug-out on the reverse slope of a ridge a half kilometer behind Mont-

## *ON THE FIELD OF HONOR*

blainville, which we had just captured. He had not been at headquarters more than ten minutes when he said, "Give me a guide to the lines," and was off, and thereafter he directed operations from the very front lines. Ordinarily the regimental command post is some distance behind the front line because the Colonel's life is considered of too much value to be continually exposed to the dangers there, but Colonel Shannon could not bear to be anywhere but among his troops who were doing the fighting. His presence and example on the line had a most inspiring effect on the men. I especially remember how by his courage he saved the day in the first big counter-attack the Boche threw against us.

We had just captured Apremont after a fierce hand-to-hand encounter. Apremont is built on a hilltop, the Aire River flows by the East of the town and open country stretches for several kilometers to the North and West, so that possession of the village gives an extensive field of fire. It was a strategic point which the Boche were determined to hold. We managed to push our line through the village and then set to work to dig in and strengthen the position. After advancing for days under all kinds of fire, cold and wet to the skin and having had little food and almost no sleep for a week, the men were utterly exhausted, and dropped down scarcely able to dig the little holes in the ground which were our only protection

## CHAPTER X

against shell-fire. The officers planned to hold the line at Apremont for a day or two until we could get hot food up and by keeping heavy guard give the men a chance to sleep. Yet we had hardly got into position when the Boche counter-attacked in force. About dusk two fresh regiments of German shock troops "came over" against our worn-out men,—of the regiment itself less than half the strength with which we started the drive remained. Out-numbered four to one and with most of our soldiers so tired they could scarcely stand, there seemed little chance of holding the village. But just at this moment—the Boche were not more than six hundred yards away—Colonel Shannon walked down the line among the men and said,—“Boys, the whole damn German army could n’t take this hill to-night.” Those few words and the encouragement of the Colonel had a marvelous effect on the soldiers. It changed them, made new men of them. The fact that their Colonel was right there during the attack with them, holding his life no dearer than that of the lowest doughboy, inspired them and made them unbeatable. The Germans did not take the hill.

It was but three days later when Colonel Shannon fell, leading the Regiment in an assault on Chatel Chehery.

## CHAPTER XI

FOR two days after the counter-attack at Apremont the regiment held its position along a sunken road on the top of the hill just beyond the village. Larry's company and mine lay alongside one another, each man in a little hole he had dug at the edge of the road. Not far ahead were the Boche lines and between us stretched a flat open field—a field where many dead and wounded Germans were lying just as they had been shot down in the attack. The Germans had not dared to come out from their lines to carry back their wounded. They knew how often they had used the sign of the Red Cross to mask a real attack, and apparently feared, even under the protection of the Red Cross, to send parties to bring in their fallen comrades. Though our troops, after continued treachery, had been forced to mistrust the use of the Red Cross by the Boche, they would not have interfered with small parties of stretcher-bearers, who might have come out in perfect safety to take in the wounded. No help came, and all day those Germans lay helpless on the field in agony from their wounds and exposure.

Larry was so chivalrous and kind-hearted that he could not bear to see any one, even an enemy suffer. After waiting all day in vain for their own men to help them, he decided to go out himself and bring back as many of the wounded Germans as he could to our first-aid post for

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medical attention. He found a stretcher-bearer who volunteered to go with him and just at dusk went out from our lines along the road to the field ahead. The Germans immediately opened fire, but Larry did not turn back. In spite of their fire he kept on, put a wounded German on the stretcher, and brought him in to our lines. Once safely back we tried to dissuade Larry from going out again. If the Boche were such fools as to fire on him when he was taking in their own wounded, surely they did not deserve to be rescued. Yet Larry went out again and again,—all night long he worked, continually under fire and at the constant risk of his life. Each time he brought in a suffering, helpless man, who because of the undaunted courage and great tenderness of one of their enemy was given a chance for medical treatment and for life. Rescuing our own wounded under heavy fire is a deed for which many have been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, but carrying to safety at the constant peril of life wounded enemies who have been abandoned by their own kin is an act of Christianity that has rarely been surpassed. And Larry accomplished this act not once in the first burst of enthusiasm with comrades to cheer him on, but time after time alone in the night with only his own bigness of heart to support him.

Larry really won the Distinguished Service Cross twice. The Colonel had decided to recommend him for the Cross

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

for an action in the Argonne, but before this recommendation had been sent to Headquarters came the action at Haumont for which the D. S. C. was actually awarded. During the latter part of the fighting in the Argonne the advance of the 109th was checked by heavy machine-gun fire from the right flank. This fire, coming from a group of machine-gun nests in a fringe of woods, swept with deadly flanking fire the fields which the regiment had to pass. There was no artillery available to blast out the machine guns, yet it was vital that the regiment continue the advance without the long delay which artillery support would mean. The tanks which started the attack with the regiment had long since been put out of action.

The Colonel called a conference of his officers as to what could be done to silence these machine guns. With one exception, the officers maintained they must wait for artillery support. They argued that the ground was so open, so difficult of approach, that it would be impossible to lead men with any hope of success and without extraordinary casualties against such a heavily defended position. The one exception was Larry. He alone thought it would be possible for an officer to take a few men and gradually work his way close enough to bomb and rush the machine-gun nests.

Since he had suggested the plan, Larry volunteered to make the attempt. He called for volunteers from his com-



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pany and led the few men chosen to the attack while the regiment waited. Largely through his own fearlessness, skill, and personal example he kept his men in hand, urged them ahead, and finally captured the guns, having suffered only very slight casualties. The regiment was enabled again to take up the advance. For this act of heroism Larry well deserved the D. S. C. which would have been awarded had he not won it later at Haumont.

Throughout the long weeks of fighting Larry was a constant source of courage and inspiration to his comrades. Ever cheerful in the worst conditions, ever ready to undertake any mission, no matter how difficult or dangerous, he always succeeded because his men put such utter trust in him. At the very blackest moments they found him the same reliant, fearless leader who overcame all difficulties. His never flagging zeal and hopefulness carried them through every trial they had to face in those terrible days of struggle.

How little one could tell from the letters Larry wrote home after the drive of the magnificent part he had played in it!

*October 13*

I have just climbed out of bed and lighted my little fire and also a candle because it is sort of a rainy, cold drizzle outside. I have only written one letter to any one in this

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

wonderful world since I wrote you the night before going into the drive, and that was a note to my dear mother yesterday to tell her how happy and well I was.

Do you remember I thought I would tell you all about the battle, but I feel so different now. I brought back no souvenirs, no tales, just my boys, well, happy, and alive—as many as I possibly could. War is just matter-of-fact, nothing like the pictures in magazines or stories. I had command of the company in battle for over a week, and everything went very successfully with the aid of “Our Father Who Art in Heaven” and my “Folks” at home.

I love to think of the Brookline church, and do you know last year I just cried at every Sunday service, I loved it so. What I love to think about now is my happy times at home and the happy times I am having in this little French cottage, with flowers and a little kitchen and our own cook. My roommate is just the corkingest chap from Tennessee, and we light our fire and pipes and are at college again. Wonderful eats: the boys have warm barracks and good food and a real rest which they honestly have earned. I am just so happy.

F. R. A.

*October 12*

Everything is going splendidly and I really think the tide has turned and there is now no let-up in the determination of the Yanks to win. I think you would be proud of

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our boys if you could see them enter battle, afraid of nothing and always forward.

I have lost several very good friends in the recent fighting, but I know they are happy and know that we stand ready to take up the work right where they left off. It is men like Gus Aspinwall who show the Boche that no sacrifice is too great, and make them realize how useless a game they are playing against the determination of the Americans and their families at home.

When at Paris, at school, and through the back areas I see supply-officers, instructors, military-police officers, railroad officers, etc., I just realize how fortunate I am to be where I am—just a little drop in the bucket but with the boys that count the most, with a little platoon where three hundred to four hundred yards straight to the front are the Boche planning how they can come forward and destroy the little villages of France and spread their doctrine of war and militarism over the world. I am by no means doing a greater service because all work for the great cause is equal—but as Charlie Eliot said as he shook my hand in the Harvard Club in Paris, “I am happy and lucky.”

F. R. A.

*October 12*

During my fourteen days drive forward I received exactly fifty-two letters. It is absolutely the finest thing

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in the whole world. Every night under cover of darkness the mail comes up, and I read your letters and those from my dear Aunts and kind friends in German dug-outs, in all kinds of shell-holes and small trenches and rainy woods. I read some of the funny parts to the boys who don't get mail, and pass around my many, many magazines. They were just wonderful, every single boy I had with me. Sometimes only a handful (fifteen or twenty), sometimes as many as one hundred and fifty, but all with the spirit to do their best, and they all agreed with the motto I told them before we started out,—that the only thing worth while is that you do right and your conscience tells you your family are proud. I recommended three for the D. S. C. and four to become officers, and I am hoping they get it because they deserve it.

F. R. A.

*October 13*

I am right on the crest of the wave, so darn happy and busy—as you know, I am still in command of the company—and in such wonderful health. With a pile of new men to organize and train and *Lore*. We expect a wonderful captain, and I have been recommended for a First Lieutenant, but it will take several months for the order to come through.

F. R. A.

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*October 16*

Lieutenant Richards and I have just lighted our cheery fire, and it is great to hear the crackling of the kindling and see the larger wood start to blaze forth and warm up our little room. We two are so happy together, just like roommates at college, and do our work together, and I tell you, we are mighty busy every second—because there are so many details to fix and letters to write about every one that ever was in the company.

It has always been the best company in the regiment and the one all the boys want to get in, as it has always stood for good fellowship, coöperation, and fair play, and I hope for the past three weeks, since I have been in charge, it has come up to the standard and lived up to the ideals.

To-day I passed my physical examination for First Lieutenant, but the appointment is not decided for a long time as it has to go to General Headquarters, A. E. F. One of my boys that I recommended has been awarded the D. S. C. I am so happy I could almost clap him on the back, but have to be very dignified while I am acting company commander.

F. R. A.

*October 21*

I have just five minutes to drop you a line before going to Reveille. You see the way we work it—Reveille at

## *ON THE FIELD OF HONOR*

6.45 and Lieutenant Richards and I take turns holding it. He sleeps until breakfast is announced by a tap at the door one morning and I the same the next. It is now twenty minutes of seven and the big red sun is just popping over the horizon. A wonderful snappy October day. I have our fire crackling and by the sizzling in the kitchen I should say the fried eggs and bacon and coffee were doing well also. Gee, this is the most wonderful fun I have ever had in my life, much better than school, because you are teaching others, not sitting on a bench and letting some one hand out lectures on subjects you already have heard one hundred and ninety-nine times.

Well, I am a bit stiff from reconnoitering yesterday afternoon. Kia will tell you all about it. It was so funny I laughed every time I woke up in the night and felt too stiff to turn over. But I give the boys five minutes of physical at Reveille and that will take it out of me, surely. I wish you could see the warm sun streaming in the window—but I know you had the same sun at breakfast this morning and that Dad probably had Kia pull down the curtains a bit.

F. R. A.

During the drive in the Argonne the officer commanding the one-pounder gun section had been killed. At school in Langes Larry had studied the one-pounder, so that in the reorganization of the 109th, after the drive

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on Oct. 23rd, Larry was transferred from G Company to Headquarters Company of the regiment to take command of the one-pounders. It is just after the transfer that he writes this next letter.

*October 23*

It was as great a surprise as to be recommended for a First Lieutenant, but I am very happy because the one-pounders have a wonderful opportunity and, if handled correctly, can save hundreds of lives of the Infantry boys when obstacles present themselves. One thing, you are absolutely free and so to speak on your own hook, because no one knows much about the one-pounder and you can train your men according to your own plan, and it is really up to you to advise the Colonel when and where you think the one-pounder can be of the greatest service.

F. R. A.

*October 28*

Just a line before turning in to say that my new job is a corker and is coming along finely. We go to the range almost every afternoon, and each day the little guns seem more accurate. We have just moved into a new town, in fact, we never stay in one more than a week. We had a sixteen mile hike and not one man in my platoon lagged behind. We had breakfast at 3.30 a.m., left

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

town about 5, and pulled into our new quarters at 1 sharp. So you see what splendid condition we are in, and as for equipment, every man has the very best.

The Y. M. C. A. system is wonderful. Each division, regiment, and battalion has its Y. M. C. A. growing smaller as the unit descends. The Y. M. C. A. man moves right with his unit and gets his supplies by truck from the unit higher up. For example, when we moved into this town at 1, relieving a French unit at 6, our Y. M. C. A. man had a large house fitted up, fire crackling on the hearth, piano with boys clustered around singing, tables to write on, and all kinds of cookies, candies, hot chocolate, smokes, etc., at his canteen. All in one afternoon. Then, in one afternoon, if we move nearer, he packs up and moves with us and sets up shop the same way. Then in the front line the candies are sent around and the writing paper and the smokes three or four times a week, and he has a big dug-out, accessible to all, and marches up and down the line with his pack of goodies on his back F. R. A.

The next letter is one Larry wrote to a friend in reference to being sent back to the States as an instructor.

*October 28*

I just want to tell you the real truth. I would be heart-broken to be sent home and not go through this winter's



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campaign at the front with the Infantry boys. Nowadays, one wants to be where they will be of the greatest service, and we young kids are very badly needed, right here, now.

Good men without their leaders suffer much, and just by being present, although you don't do or say much, you can perhaps save a hundred lives. I was in the battle of the Argonne continuously going forward with my boys for fourteen days, and I felt just as good afterwards as I have ever felt in my life. It is true, youth is what counts most over here, and the older men, with greater military knowledge and experience, count for most as instructors at home.

Every day the morning papers bring us the best of news, but we over here have no desire for the war to end until Germany can give proof of her unconditional surrender, because our Allies have suffered too much.

I am just having a great old time, although you will find when I come home that war will not have changed me a single bit. It is just calm thinking and definite action which makes a man worth more, and it makes one understand and love friend and foe alike.

F. R. A.

*October 31*

To-morrow begins a new month. This one just passed has been wonderful in every way. Somehow the seasons

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seem to merge in one another without one being able to notice it. The leaves are falling and the smell of autumn and frost in the early morning show that winter is coming on, and yet the days are lovely, and so invigorating it is a joy to drill and exercise. Isn't it a coincidence? Yesterday my six months on foreign soil was exactly completed, and yesterday evening my runner brought me my commission as First Lieutenant. So if I were to march in to supper to-night at J. P., I would have silver bars, black braid on the cuff of my long overcoat, also a gold service stripe on my left sleeve for six months' service, and a red keystone on my left shoulder because that is our divisional insignia.

But as I sit in my little French cottage, looking out at the chrysanthemums and the autumn garden, you would see me with nothing to ornament except good health. Rank, etc. are nothing ; what counts is to be able to give what is expected of a man with authority, reputation, experience, education, and bringing up. As Ruthie wrote me in yesterday's mail,—“Go forth into the busy world and love it. Interest yourself in its joys and sorrows. Try what you can do for men rather than what you can make them do for you—and you will know what it is to have men and boys your own better than if you were their king and master.”

F. R. A.

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*October 26*

Am sitting right up close to our little stove and from a pile of wood in the corner I add piece by piece to keep the little home cheery.

I am no longer lonely, for the spirit which comes across the water reminds me of those at home giving the greater sacrifice and never saying lonely.

I rode down to my old home ( G Company ) this afternoon and had supper, and then rode back at a slow trot under the stars. They make you think and want to do good. We went on the range this afternoon, and I find I have four good guns and four good gun crews all organized and ready for action. I am so encouraged because I want to do something with these little guns. We may be going up to-morrow and I want to fire my guns to kill German Machine-Gun Nests.

I am going to get my heart and soul into the new work and learn to love the boys the same as I loved the boys of Company G, for otherwise it is hard to kill many Germans.

As I sit by my fire, I just want to say a word about the Private who does the fighting. You and I owe him a lot; to-night he is sleeping in a big barn with great shell holes in the roof, very, very cold. To-morrow he is up at six and stands in line for half an hour to get a dish of oatmeal and sits on the curb to eat it. At eight, at my com-

## *ON THE FIELD OF HONOR*

mand, he drags the gun over hills and valleys, fingers cold. The day after, on my command, he fights all day and sleeps in the mud and rain in the woods or trenches and perhaps gets killed and forgotten, because (it is hard to say and believe) in an advance that faithful soul and true is forgotten and perhaps buried after two or three days, but I feel sure God knows the work of all His children and will comfort the mother. The mother of a Private has the right to be very, very proud, for it is he who is standing against evil on the side of Right. F. R. A.

## CHAPTER XII

ON the morning of November 11th, the 109th went into action once more. They attacked a portion of the German line at Haumont beyond St. Mihiel. Ever since the St. Mihiel drive in September the Germans had been busy strengthening their new line, and the position which the 109th was to assault was exceptionally strongly entrenched and defended.

Ordinarily in an attack the one-pounders followed the Infantry. Their position was usually somewhat behind the first wave, and when the Infantry were forced to stop because of machine-gun fire which they could not silence, the one-pounders were brought into action to knock out the M'G' nests. But in this attack Larry had his guns in the very first wave—a position much more perilous than the one-pounders usually took, but one in which Larry felt he could use his guns to the best advantage, for he could get into action quicker and probably save many lives in the Infantry by silencing the German machine guns the moment they opened fire. It was the first time the 109th had attacked with the one-pounders in the first line.

Shortly after the attack commenced, heavy fire from an enemy strong point held up the advance. Larry led a couple of his one-pounders and some machine guns and went ahead, leaving the main body of our troops. He ad-

## *ON THE FIELD OF HONOR*

vanced right onto the German line and opened fire with his guns. Before long the supply of ammunition gave out and Larry was isolated with his small group—cut off almost within the enemy's line. Only his quick wit saved the lives of his men. He sent men back for a new supply of ammunition. A German officer called on the group to surrender, showing they were almost surrounded. Larry, hoping the Germans had not been able to ascertain his real position and numbers because of the heavy mist, shouted back a demand that the Germans themselves surrender as they were in the Americans' power. For some few minutes he was able to hold the enemy's attention in a parley so that they did not open fire, though the few Americans were without ammunition and entirely at the Germans' mercy. Then his men came up with more ammunition and Larry, quickly getting the guns into action, silenced the strong point.

By this time the attention of the whole German line had been attracted, and from both flanks concentrated machine-gun fire was poured into the little group. Larry withdrew his men, himself the last to leave, fearlessly exposing himself so that he might place the men under cover. He was mortally wounded, but would accept no aid for himself. He directed the dressing of his men's wounds and their evacuation and, despite his own fatal wound, did not allow a first aid man to touch him until

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every one of his men, even the most slightly wounded, had been cared for. To the last Larry had absolutely no thought of self. Just as all his life his one great purpose had been to do for others, to make others happy, at the end his only consideration was to help those in need and disregard his own great want.

. . . . .

Larry wrote in one of his letters that a "Star of Happiness" seemed to be guiding him from one happy place to another. That Star was his own bright, happy personality. Every place he went was happy because he himself was always cheerful; no matter how dark the outlook to others, Larry saw only the good. His brave cheerfulness lent itself to all with whom he came in contact, he was an inspiration to every one that knew him. I remember that just before he came back to the regiment from school I had been rather discouraged over my work. When Larry got back I went to see him, and after an hour with him I felt strengthened and refreshed—he seemed to emanate vitality and hopefulness.

Larry's great ideal was Service. His one desire, as he says in his letters, was to be where he could be of the greatest service. His very high sense of duty made him doubt his own ability; he prayed he might be worthy of the trust reposed in him. How completely he fulfilled the trust, we all know.

## ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

It is hard for those who were not in the line to appreciate the difference in Larry's attitude from that of most of the officers sent from the front to school. Though they did some work, they looked on the school as a rest and a chance to have a good time which they had earned. But Larry saw only the opportunity to devote himself most diligently to study, so that he might play his part equally with his men that he left back on the line fighting. He worked with his whole heart and soul to get all possible instruction from the school which he could turn to the advantage of his "boys" when he got back to them.

Larry possessed the rare combination of indomitable courage, of utter fearlessness, and of loving care and tender solicitude for his men. One of his letters, written just after the Argonne drive, says,—“I brought back no souvenirs, no tales, only my boys well, happy, and alive—as many as I possibly could.” He constantly cared for their comfort and welfare, yet when the time came in battle that he must risk all he never hesitated, but pushed ahead, his own life always the first hazarded.

By his simplicity and tenderness, Larry won the love of the French people everywhere he went. I remember his often telling me that he for one was going to do everything in his power to give the French a good idea of the American soldier. He loved the children and was



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constantly doing little acts of kindness for them, playing they were his own brother and sister at home.

Larry was intensely proud and happy to be able to stand up for his ideals, to be fighting for a cause in which he so thoroughly believed. He says, "In this game as a platoon leader the chances are pretty good of being killed, but it is the dandiest of them all." And later, "It is easy to see that one man's life is nothing, if it came to making a sacrifice for this high cause." His greatest joy was his love and attachment for his men. He writes of those in his platoon who fell in action on the Vesle,— "They had a spirit of love that can never die." Larry himself most perfectly exemplified that spirit, and among all who knew him his "spirit of love" will forever keep his memory bright.

#### CITATION FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

Lieut. FRANCIS REED AUSTIN led a platoon of machine guns and two one-pounder guns with their crews under cover of a fog within the enemy's lines and attacked at close range a strong point held by 25 men and 10 machine guns.

After this position had been reduced, concentrated machine-gun fire from the danks forced Lieut. Austin and his party to withdraw. Exposing himself in order to place his men under cover, Lieut. Austin was mortally wounded but he directed the dressing of the wounds of his men and their evacuation before he would accept aid for himself.



*First Lieutenant Francis Reed Austin*  
*D. S. C.*



A Poem dedicated to FRANCIS REED AUSTIN  
by WILLIAM F. MANLEY, one of his Classmates

### TO A COMRADE

*I cannot think that you will not return,  
For you were ever one who seemed a part  
Of all the joy and laughter of my world.  
I cannot feel that your brave, patient heart  
Is quiet. That the twilight dropping down  
Enfolds you, and the earth in which you lie  
So silently. That you hear not the wind—  
Feel not the sunlit hours passing by.  
These things you knew, and ever sought to find  
The beauty that lay hidden—made the knave  
A knight, the darkness into day,  
Your world into a gentle place and brave.  
Dead? Silent? Then the dust must have a tongue  
Clearer than all the unleashed winds of night,  
For you have come to me and spoken clear,  
And I have seen the laughter and the light  
That were your soul's and not your body's. You  
Who were my comrade will not cease to be  
My dearest comrade, closer than before.  
Cannot I hear your voice beyond the sea?  
And if your strong young heart has ceased its beating  
And sleeps beneath the meadow flowers' smile,  
Did not your soul see some great light, and meeting  
Its comrades there, linger a little while;  
Watching us patient as we tread the years  
That lead us ever to you, can we dare  
To shrink from death or think your absence long,  
Knowing that you are ever waiting there?*











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